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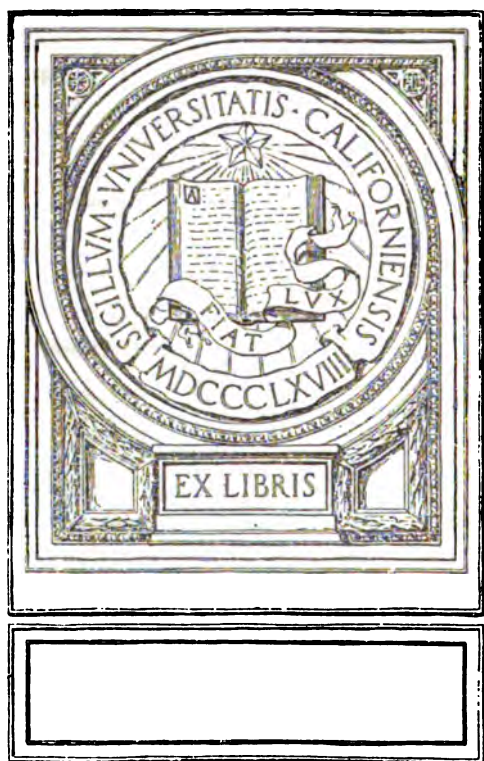
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# THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA



1971



*[Photo Russell.]*  
**HIS EXCELLENCY THE HON. C. D. B. KING, LL.D.,**  
President-Elect and Secretary of State of the Liberian Republic.

# THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

BEING A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE  
NEGRO REPUBLIC, WITH ITS HISTORY,  
COMMERCE, AGRICULTURE, FLORA,  
FAUNA, AND PRESENT METHODS  
OF ADMINISTRATION

BY

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F.R.G.S., F.Z.S., ETC.

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IN ZAMBEZIA," "A HANDBOOK OF CHI-MAKU," ETC.

WITH MAP AND 37 ILLUSTRATIONS



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TO VINDI  
ABROGLIAO

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## PREFACE

FOR some curious reason, which I must confess has hitherto completely baffled me, it has usually been customary to write of Liberia and the Liberians in a tone of gentle melancholy ; to descant upon the country and the people to whom it belongs as with a pen dipped in sighs, and generally to regard them with the despondent air of the good old Scots mission doctor, who was wont to raise the spirits of his convalescent patients by reminding them of "hoo often they went off i' the relapse, ye ken."

As a matter of fact, there seems very little organically the matter with Liberia, in spite of the inevitable depression which the Great War has brought in its train ; and, therefore, when I set out to give some account of the Negro Republic in its latter-day aspect—a task which I began shortly before the bursting of the world storm, and which long thereafter lay unfinished—I saw no reason to do so in any strain of despondency—quite the reverse.

In the making of this book I have endeavoured, in so far as has been possible, to avoid criticism, and merely to describe, and in this I have been more successful than, at the outset, seemed humanly possible ; but if and where any critical remarks may have crept in, I feel sure that my many Liberian friends will accept them as made in a spirit of sympathetic friendship by one upon whom, long before he set foot upon their fascinating shores, the spell of Africa had already irresistibly fallen. My task has, therefore, been a doubly grateful one, since it has enabled me to chronicle not only much which one may admire and praise, but, in addition, an economic situation which will assuredly bid fair, when normal conditions shall have returned to us



once more, to attain to a measure of gratifying expansion and progress.

Liberia will then, I feel convinced, be in the position of having her feet placed firmly upon the ladder which should bring her in time to great heights. The rung which she has already reached is not, as yet, a high one perhaps, but the way before her seems plain and unmistakable. The guidance afforded by the painstaking and hard-working group of foreign officials who are now labouring in her service, and, prior to the outbreak of war, had already set her somewhat difficult finances in something resembling the rudiments of order, has been of incalculable benefit to the country as a whole, and this, supplemented by the adoption of a liberal policy of internal development, cannot but result in the dawning of prosperity upon the country in great and ever-increasing measure.

And Liberians are anxious to receive guidance. They tell one so with the utmost frankness. They ask for and welcome it with appreciation. On many occasions since it became known that I was contemplating something in the nature of a book upon their country, high public officials have begged me to tell them in it exactly what I thought of them and of their methods, to make suggestions, and to offer advice ; and although I have only found it possible to carry out their wishes to a limited extent, my task has been singularly free from difficulty, since the recommendations which I have seen fit to make are so perfectly obvious.

In the preparation of the following chapters I have been greatly assisted by President Howard and ex-President Barclay, who have furnished me with the details from which my historical sketches have been drawn. I must, in addition, acknowledge my indebtedness to the writings of D'Ollone, Jore, Delafosse,

Johnston, and Starr, which have afforded me acceptable means of making interesting and instructive comparisons. My wife has aided me by contributing the drawings which illustrate my chapters upon flora and fauna, whilst photographs have been supplied by Messieurs de Coutouly, Mangard, Appleby, Garden, and Rowell. Lastly my grateful thanks are due to Mr. Chetwynd Pigott, whose long experience of the savage, up-country tribes has enabled him to furnish me with much of the material for my chapter upon the natives.

R. C. F. MAUGHAM.

DAKAR, 1918.

## SUPPLEMENTARY PREFACE

THIS book was written in 1918, and would have been published before the end of the year if Press difficulties and the limitations placed by the Government upon the use of paper had not prevented. It will be published towards the end of this year, or early in 1920. Since the author completed his work in 1918, important, indeed epoch-making, changes have taken place in the history of Liberia.

Public sentiment in the United States of America seems to have influenced the American Government to take a closer and more practical interest in Liberia than heretofore. In September, 1918, acting under the advice of President Wilson, the Treasury Department placed five million dollars to the credit of the Liberian Government for use in the opening of roads and making other public improvements. At the commencement of the European War the finances of Liberia, which arise mainly out of Customs' duties, were under the control and management of an International Board of Customs Receivers, composed of a representative from the Governments of America, Great Britain, and Germany, respectively. The German Government retired from this

board under the Peace Treaty, undertaking to give up all interest in Liberia and to withdraw from all participation in the development of the country. With the approval of Great Britain and France, and at the request of the Liberian Government, the American Government will hereafter be the sole adviser in Liberian affairs, these two Governments withdrawing from further participation in the management of the Customs.

The Hon. C. D. B. King, Liberian Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and President-Elect, was Liberia's representative at the Peace Conference; and as he will enter upon the discharge of his duties on the first of January, 1920, the present Liberian Government, which is about to go out of office, gave him full power to decide upon matters affecting the immediate and future policy of the country.

His attitude at the Peace Conference commended itself to all the Governments interested in Liberian affairs, as is evidenced by the fact that the French Government decorated him with the 'Order of Commander of the Legion of Honour; H.M. the King of Great Britain received him in State at Buckingham Palace; and he visited the American Government at Washington, being received there by President Wilson, who bade him to assure the people of Liberia that America would take a closer interest in them than heretofore. Mr. Wilson also expressed the hope that the two Governments would hereafter co-operate closely and harmoniously together. Mr. King, while in Washington, held conversations with the Department of Foreign Affairs, and settled upon the policy of the future relationship between the two Governments.

Mr. King has committed himself to a definite policy so far as economic and industrial development is concerned, and has cordially encouraged representatives of international capital, who have acquired important interests in Liberia, with considered plans for development work on a large scale.

THE EDITOR.

LONDON, December 23, 1919.

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# The Republic of Liberia

## CHAPTER I

### GEOGRAPHY AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTRY

SITUATED between the British Colony of Sierra Leone and that of the French Ivory Coast, possessing a frontage to the Atlantic Ocean of 340 odd miles and a total area of about 43,000 square miles, the Republic of Liberia, although normally only twelve days removed from the United Kingdom, is, nevertheless, in all probability the one portion of West Africa of which to-day the least is known to us. Liberia for many years past—since, in fact, thanks to the vigilance of the British and other cruisers of the period, its importance as a happy hunting ground for slavers vanished—has seen herself, so to speak, outdistanced by neighbouring divisions in the striking commercial competition of the latter half of the nineteenth century, and, (due to a variety of easily comprehensible causes, has not as yet reached that point of economic development which is hers by right of geographical position, of latent resources, and, in no small degree, of the ability and capacity of her people to derive and enjoy the fullest measure of advantage from it.)

Geographically it is only possible to speak with certainty of the sea-board and some of the surrounding frontiers, since the interior, but little explored and with most of its more prominent features still inaccurately



## THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

placed upon the map, remains to a great extent unknown country possessing who shall say what absorbingly interesting and valuable features, who can tell what unsuspected and unrealized sources of wealth? From the Atlantic, whose immense, glassy rollers beat upon the Liberian sands in a never-ending, roaring, snowy surf, the country stretches inland for a distance, in some places, of fully 200 miles; is densely forested, and possessed of a native population variously estimated, but authoritatively stated to number fully 700,000 souls. In Liberia we begin to near what may perhaps be described as the western extremity of African Guinea—the point where the tremendous forests, with their prolonged and drenching rainy seasons, prepare to dwindle until, not very much farther to the westward, they give place to the vast, sandy expanses of the great French Colony of Sénégal, whose chief outlet is found at the port of Dakar. But even as far as its most westerly border, namely, the frontier which separates it from Sierra Leone, Liberia is remarkable for a density of forest and an annual rainfall assuredly second to none at any point on the far-flung coasts of the African continent.

Cutting the Republic into four unequal sections, the Cavalla, St. John, St. Paul, and Mano Rivers discharge their waters into the ocean; the first and last named forming respectively its eastward and westward political boundaries. Of these, the Cavalla is without doubt the most important, and perhaps the most interesting. Rising, so far as is known, in the Nimba Mountains, near the French Soudanese border—which is also the source of the St. Paul River—it flows under different names through an exceedingly broken and hilly country, receiving various confluent streams to swell its volume from the Druple and Satro Ranges to the east. Its course as a whole is easterly and south-easterly, and it is understood to be navigable for boats for a distance of fully 80 miles from the point, a few miles eastward of Cape Palmas, where it empties itself, over a dangerous bar, into the Atlantic.

Consideration of this, unquestionably the longest river in the Liberian Republic, has betrayed me into beginning

my description of the coast-lands at their eastern instead of their western extremity ; but this is of little consequence since, at its mouth, we find ourselves within a few miles of that important commercial centre, Harper, built on the sheltered side of the promontory of Cape Palmas. It is said that the early Portuguese name for this well-known headland was "O Cabo das Palmas," or "Cape of the Palms," and, at the present time, whatever it may have been at their period of its history, it is covered with large numbers of that beautiful and useful growth, the coco-nut, which affords so graceful a tropical aspect to such a wide extent of the West African Coast.

Harper, named after an active member of the old American Colonization Society, by whose aid, as will be duly related, the Liberian Republic in course of time came to establish itself, is a settlement of some considerable importance. The chief town of the County of Maryland, and charmingly situated in the midst of luxuriant tropical vegetation, the red-tiled roofs of its neatly built houses peep picturesquely from a pleasing background of deep green mangoes, glossy bread-fruit trees, and waving palm fronds. Near by, the yellow sands, with their eternal snowy line of foam, and beyond the jade-green rollers, the deep sapphire of the African sea. Truly a feast of delightfully harmonious colour. Here a considerable commercial community is established, both European and Liberian, and the township is, practically speaking, the mart and business centre of fertile Maryland. Unhappily, however, like every other river in West Africa, the Cavalla possesses so dangerous a bar that Harper, several miles away, has come to be looked upon as the more suitable disembarkation place for passengers and goods destined for the settlements on the river, an extensive land-locked salt lagoon known as Shepherd Lake affording a valuable and much appreciated means of transport, which is effected chiefly by the aid of large canoes, along almost the whole extent of the sheltered waterway.

The next river of importance, as we pursue our way westward along the Liberian coast, is the St. John River,

not so much from the point of view of its navigability perhaps, as from that of the wide extent of the country which it drains. The St. John River is supposed by some authorities to rise upon the plateau of the Satro Mountains, whilst by others it is confidently stated, by means of the important stream called the Nuon, either to join the Cavalla to the north of Mount Bo, the most northerly peak of the Satro Range, or if, as is also stated, the Nuon does not join the Cavalla, but forms the upper waters of the Cestos River, then the St. John must derive its source from practically the same origin as the Cavalla, that is to say, on the high water-parting over the French border between the Sassandra and the system of streams flowing southward into Liberia. Upon these matters, however, reliable information is entirely lacking, and no doubt these interesting questions are fated to remain undecided until a proper geographical survey of the country is in course of time undertaken.

As it flows into the sea, the St. John River widens, several picturesque islands occurring only a few miles from the mouth, where it receives the Benson River on the left and the Mechlin on the right bank. Here there are a number of Liberian settlements of no small importance, namely, Edina, Paynesburg, Upper Buchanan, and, slightly to the eastward and separated from it by an expanse of somewhat malodorous sea-beach, the considerable centre of Grand Bassa or Lower Buchanan. The bay formed by Macdowell Point, past which the St. John's waters gain the ocean, and Grand Bassa Point, some few miles to the south-east, is profusely studded with dangerous, rocky reefs—in fact, landing at the mouth of the St. John River, by reason of the amazing surf and the heavy river current, is a difficult undertaking at any time of year, but especially so in the rainy season, when the breakers are exceptionally impressive and proportionately perilous. (At Lower Buchanan occur, for the most part, the factories or agencies of European firms whose headquarters are established at Monrovia. There you may see a small, somewhat straggling, township, with neatly built houses



SURF ON THE MESURADO PROMONTORY.



THE MESURADO LAGOON.



A VIEW OF KRUTOWN.



MONROVIA—THE RESIDENTIAL QUARTER.

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set in gardens gay with scarlet blooming acacias, strongly scented pink oleanders, quaintly foliaged bread-fruit, arums, bananas, and many other interesting and ornamental forms of tropical vegetation.)

Fifty or sixty miles to the westward, and passing on our way the estuary of the Dukwia and Farmington Rivers, which, swollen by the waters of the Junk, flow into the sea past the settlement of Marshall, we come to Monrovia, the capital of Liberia, perched picturesquely upon the bold promontory of Cape Mesurado, or Montserrado as it was called in the days of the early settlers, and some three or four miles to the east of the mouth of the St. Paul River.

The last-named stream, under the name of the Diani, is understood to rise in the French Soudan, where the country, having from various causes freed itself from the appalling coastward burden of impenetrable forest, rises into a high, fertile, park-like plateau, and is generally referred to as the Mandingo Country. The length of the St. Paul River is estimated roughly at 280 miles, and after entering Liberia and receiving the Tofa and the Ule from the north-westward, it pursues a comparatively straight course until it reaches the sea, over probably the worst bar of the whole of this dangerous coast. Fortunately Monrovia, which is built along the shores of the usually placid Mesurado Lagoon, is enabled to communicate with the St. Paul River, and thus, with an important expanse of central interior, by means of a convenient backway called the Stockton Creek, a narrow and rather shallow tidal channel which connects the Mesurado Lagoon with the St. Paul River near its point of discharge into the sea, and thus the passage of the terrible bar is avoided. On entering Liberia from the northward, in addition to the two confluent already mentioned, the St. Paul River receives the Nipwe Stream flowing westward from near Fanha in the Nimba Mountains, as also the turbulent Tuma which, after pursuing a singularly circuitous course from its supposed source near Mount Kwinyei, joins the main stream a little to the north of Sanoyei. Until within 20 miles of the sea the



St. Paul abounds in cascades and rapids, and, for this reason, its navigability affords no great promise of future utility as a means of transport, more especially when regard is had to its very moderate depth. Still, I suppose, by means of light-draught, stern-wheel steamers, communication between Monrovia and the first cataracts could be easily and expeditiously maintained, whence it is in contemplation one day to construct a railroad to the rich native centre of Boporo, some 50 miles to the northward.

Passing the remarkable promontory of Cape Mount, the highest and most commanding feature of the Liberian coast, we arrive soon afterwards at the estuary of the Republic's western frontier, the Mano River, whose value as a navigable waterway is wholly negligible. The Mano rises and flows for many miles through thick forest country, populous with herds of elephants, and where, for a long way, it is known as the Bewa. Receiving several confluent, it grows gradually in width if not in depth, and, passing the Liberian Customs Station at Gene, gains the sea over the usual sandy bar some 20 miles to the southward.

There are, of course, other rivers in Liberia, some of which, for example, the Lofa, Nipwe or Cestos, Sangwin, Sinoe, and Dewa, although, so far as is known, of no great length or value from the point of view of navigability, reach, nevertheless, in some cases, to an impressive width and volume as the coast is neared, swarm with highly appreciable fish of many varieties, and display to the full all that amazing wealth of colour and variety of vegetation which lend to all African waterways so compelling and arresting a charm.

Let us now retrace our steps eastward, and consider a little more in detail a few of the Liberian coast's more prominent features and centres.

Allusion has just been made to that fine and prominent landmark, Cape Mount, which, when one is passing by sea, appears to remain in sight for the greater part of the day, so high does it stand in its lonely isolation. It should be remembered that, with the exception of the elevated, mountainous country at the back of Freetown,

Sierra Leone, and of one or two less commanding features, much of the West African coast north of the Gulf of Guinea is low, and possesses but little to attract the attention of the passing traveller. The splendour of the contrast presented by Cape Mount will, therefore, be readily understood when it is stated that this fine promontory abruptly rears its majestic presence to a height of nearly 1,100 feet above the sea.

Cape Mount is surrounded on three sides by the sea ; it is beautifully wooded right up to its summit, and with its suave, swelling undulations, richly clothed in a covering of appropriate greenery, presents a picture of refreshing coolness and repose as it boldly raises its impressive head from the sweltering heat of the West African coastlands. On both sides of this headland the shore is low and marshy. At its foot, on the north-west side, nestles the small Liberian settlement of Robertsport, named after a prominent and highly respected President whose name is still a household word in the land, whilst, on the higher ground near the summit, we find a small village somewhat imposingly called Kongo Town, and a peaceful centre of the Presbyterian Episcopal Mission. The more elevated portions of the promontory are extremely fertile, and here gardens, plantations of coffee, with coco-nut palms and many varieties of fruit trees, flourish luxuriantly, while the appreciable coolness of the comparatively high elevation must be a great joy to the few who are privileged to take advantage of it.

To the north-east of Cape Mount there is an extraordinary salt-water lake or lagoon, some 10 miles in length by 3 or 4 miles wide, but possessing no great depth of water. This is called Fisherman's Lake. It receives the Mafa River from Gbandi at its north-western end, and one or two other unimportant streams. It is a thousand pities that this fine sheet of water is not deeper. Had it been so, it would have formed beyond question one of the finest harbours at any point of the African coast. In general appearance, Fisherman's Lake, especially at the point at which most of the Liberian dwellings occur, is most picturesque. Entirely unspoiled as

yet by roads, bridges, or other works calculated to mar the quiet beauty of the scene, a narrow path skirts the shore, the green of the marsh-grasses rustling against your legs as you saunter along it. Although not very, exuberant, handsome tree growths afford pleasant shade ; stark, graceful palms reflect their fronds in the usually glassy water, and interesting shore birds flit about the shallows disturbed now and then by the quiet-gliding canoe of some native fisherman. Out towards the entrance, Gambia Island extends almost the entire distance across, and seven or eight other small rocky islets appear to have been flung broadcast in the wide opening between the main body of Cape Mount and the spacious entrance to the Mafa River. I can imagine no more suitable situation for a really well-devised sanatorium than the cool, breeze-swept summit of this great landmark. It possesses quite an extensive plateau dotted all over with great green, rounded-topped mango-trees, luxuriant, smooth-stemmed bombax, and waving coconuts. Here and there small gardens and plantations lend an air of tranquil industry, and furnish a pleasing background for the small, trim, comfortable-looking nuts. Here and there small gardens and plantations presents not only the most interesting and commanding feature of the Liberian coast, but will one day become, I doubt not, a populous (and popular) residential centre.

Thence eastward to the capital, a distance of some 40 miles, the sea-coast is low, marshy in places, and essentially West African in appearance. A thin fringe of palms can be discerned here and there ; occasionally a cluster of kapok or mango-trees mark the site of some native village ; far away in towards the shore the canoes of fishermen dot the surface, whilst away to the westward, gradually growing faint as the mellowing distance increases, Cape Mount melts on the horizon, a splendid feature hard to spare.

Long before it has ceased to be visible, even in the haziest of heat-radiating weather, another dark, low headland has made its appearance before us. As we approach we see that it is another promontory, but far less com-

manding than the one astern. This is Cape Mesurado, upon the north-western face of which the town of Monrovia—named after the late President Monroe, the well-remembered doctrinaire—or rather, the greater part of it, has been built. In the shelter from the south-east formed by the Cape, a sufficiently secure anchorage in plenty of water and on a sandy bottom may be found for considerable numbers of large vessels, and thence, across a bar which is rarely very difficult to pass, the calm, tranquil waters of the Mesurado Lagoon are reached, from whose shores Monrovia rises tier upon tier, until the upper part, situated on the ridge of the promontory, and possibly 140 feet above the water-level, is gained at the cost of some small exertion. Immediately before the town lie two small rocky islets, picturesquely ornamented with kapok trees and palms, beyond which, upon the opposite side of the lagoon, a group of native huts, thatched with palm fronds and so near the water as to appear to be built in it, mark the site of a settlement of the Vai people, a particularly interesting race, to whom reference will hereafter be made.

As we come across the rollers of the bar, on the town side, and packed away upon a sand-bank at the foot of the ascent to the main portion of Monrovia, one sees another curious native settlement. This is Krutown, the principal residential centre of the Kru people on the coast of the County of Montserrado. Krutown is extremely populous, and must contain several thousands of these sturdy, independent natives. It possesses a complete administration of its own in miniature, and is ruled by a governor and vice-governor, who exercise considerable authority, and are responsible to the Liberian Government for the well-being and good behaviour of their numerous subjects. Krutown has its own places of worship, its own clubs and social institutions, which are duly recognized and possess many privileges, and, in embryo, perhaps, but still existing, a system of trades unionism which has already, on several painful occasions, succeeded in making its power felt. In appearance Krutown differs in no special particular from the native

quarters of such places as Zanzibar, Mozambique, and other well-known East African centres. The square huts are thatched with palm fronds in precisely the same fashion as is followed in East Africa, and the not infrequent coco-nut palms springing up from among them, go far to endow the small settlement with a strikingly oriental appearance.

The extremity of Cape Mesurado, to which the name of Mamba Point has been given—possibly in recognition of its affluence of snakes—stands high above the sea, into which it descends almost precipitously from a height of close upon 300 feet. Upon its well-wooded extremity stands the lighthouse, and the ruins of Fort Norris, containing a number of interesting old cannon, and from here may be obtained a wonderfully beautiful view of sea and river and distant forested hills, with the red and white houses and home-like church spires of Monrovia clustered at one's feet in their appropriate environment of tropical verdure.

We are now afforded a clear view of the surrounding water-ways. We see ourselves, as we stand on the summit of Mamba Point, begirt on two sides by the ocean and the placid-looking anchorage at our feet. Following the line of the latter as it skirts the extensive Bushrod Island, we view, about four miles away, the angry rollers of the bar of the St. Paul River. Stockton Creek, which affords ingress into it, as described elsewhere, is seen almost immediately below us, whilst beyond, widening out into quite a commanding basin, the Mesurado River, surrounded by green mangroves and picturesque screw-pines, stretches away to the north-eastward where, narrowing again soon after it leaves our range of vision, it forms one of a network of creeks, impassable except for canoe traffic, which, by the aid of the Junk River flowing westward from Marshall, transforms the thirty miles or so of coast-line between that settlement and Monrovia into a well-defined, wooded peninsula.

The appearance of Monrovia itself, which may contain between 4,000 and 5,000 inhabitants, both from the

water and from the summit of Mamba Point, whence we are still regarding it, is by no means unpicturesque, and affords the observer an opportunity of forming a dim idea of the astounding amount of hard manual labour which, in the early days of the capital's history, must have been expended in the difficult task of clearing it of its burden of vegetation and forest. The town consists of five long streets running parallel with the water front. No attempt has been made to pave them or clean them or remove the grass and rocky outcrop, and they present, therefore, the unusual appearance of thoroughfares covered with short vegetation upon which sheep, goats, and occasionally a few head of cattle graze contentedly, and where, if a jealous eye be kept upon it the while, the family washing may be advantageously laid out in the sun to dry. Now although, of course, these vegetation-encumbered streets may be considered by my readers to be an indication of want of energy on the part of the municipal authorities, I am by no means sure that, at present, at any rate, their clearance is wholly either necessary or desirable. After all, it is futile to expend heavy appropriations upon the construction of made roads which cannot be used for wheeled traffic. The reason for this is that you cannot get out of the very circumscribed limits of Monrovia except by water. As we have seen, it is situated at the extremity of a peninsula, a road through whose narrow isthmus would, in actual conditions, take years to cut owing to the difficult country and almost impenetrable forests which would oppose themselves to such a project.

The style of architecture of the Monrovia houses is peculiar, and is a relic, no doubt, of that to which, in the United States, the founders of the Liberian Republic had grown accustomed. Built of brick, with tiled, or, more recently, corrugated iron, roofs, carried to an extraordinarily high pitch, the greater part of these dwellings consist of two stories, with a wide balcony, or "piazza" as it is called, roofed over as described, the roof, as well as the balcony flooring, being supported by massive brick or plaster pillars. These houses are usually fairly

roomy and commodious, and are surrounded by gardens which, in some cases, are tastefully laid out, and go far to heighten their air of homely comfort.

During the last few years, however, several new buildings have been erected of a more ambitious character. Of these a new official residence for the President is the most important, and this is really a handsome and striking piece of architecture. Here, as in the case of several others, the old, time-honoured plans have been laid aside, and I cannot but feel that the general appearance of the city is considerably the gainer thereby. But in Monrovia, except in recent years, display in building has always been studiously and, I think, appropriately avoided. Thus, the old presidential residence, known as the Executive Mansion, and in reality the "White House" of Liberia, as also the Hall of Representatives in which the periodical meetings of the Legislature are held, are, in the true spirit of democracy, planned and constructed with a complete avoidance of ostentation which carries with it a dignity entirely its own; but I cannot but think that a time has come when Monrovia is justified in endowing herself with buildings of a character more in keeping with the position she holds as the capital city. There are four or five large and spacious churches, some of which are commodious and well fitted, whose proportions, stained glass windows, and general appearance are a striking testimony to that manifest devotion to religious exercises which is so strong a characteristic of the Liberian people.

There are disagreeable features in Monrovia, of course. The people are not, as a whole, very careful of what they do with their household refuse; sanitation is a science not deeply studied, and odours are not always ambrosial; but I see no particular point in saying more on this subject. Every town with which I am acquainted possesses features which one is glad to get away from; it is not, therefore, unpardonably to Monrovia's discredit that she is no better in this respect than her neighbours.

About half a mile from the town a large building is devoted to the purposes of a national college, and, in

normal times, affords instruction to about eighty or ninety more or less advanced pupils, and receives an annual subvention from the Treasury. Some of the pupils have risen to great eminence in the Government and elsewhere, and I hope, when funds for its maintenance again become available, it will continue the valuable work which it has hitherto done, sometimes in the face of no small difficulty and discouragement.

At the eastern extremity of what might with considerable propriety be called the Mesurado Peninsula, stands the small Liberian settlement of Marshall, named after a distinguished legal luminary who, among other doubtless meritorious actions, wrote a life of George Washington. Marshall stands on the westward side of a small basin, which is in reality the place of meeting of the waters of the Dukwia and Farmington Rivers, as also of those of the River Junk. The rendezvous of these three not unimportant streams is a large island-studded bay, surrounded by mangroves, screw-pines, bombax, cotton-trees, and many other water-loving growths, the home of the colobus monkey, the mangabey, and an occasional sad-looking hornbill.

Marshall presents features in nowise differing from the small Liberian settlements already described. It contains precisely the same not unpicturesque houses surrounded by low brick-walled gardens, and built along the same vegetation enshrouded streets. The township is a scattered one, and consists, with the dwellers upon the surrounding creeks and waterways, of probably 700 or 800 persons. These must at times, in the height of the rainy season for instance, feel greatly isolated from their friends in the capital, for amongst its other distinctions Marshall has the undesirable reputation of possessing a particularly bad and perilous river bar, a fact which in the past has very seriously militated against the importance to which, in happier conditions, the small settlement would doubtless have attained.

There are, of course, scattered along the Liberian coast a host of other small communities, such, for example, as Grand Cess (formerly marked Sesters or



Cesters), Greenville, chief town of the Sinoe division, Bafu, Webo, and others, but since the centres already described, with the exception of Monrovia, may be taken as typical of them, it would only prove wearisome, perhaps, to refer to each in detail.

The counties into which the Republic of Liberia has been divided are four in number—Montserrado, whose county town, as we have seen, is the capital; Grand Bassa, with headquarters at a settlement of that name; Sinoe, whose chief town is Greenville; and Maryland, with an administrative centre at Harper, already described. Of these four counties the largest and most important is that of Montserrado, the origin of whose name is enveloped in mystery, but which is more than suspected of having acquired it through the bad writing of an early visitor, who, struggling after his departure to decipher his notes, read "Montserrado" for Mesurado. Montserrado County then, in addition to containing the capital, is traversed by the St. Paul River, with its numerous farms and small settlements, contains the commanding promontory of Cape Mount, and, among other advantages, is endowed with that of being bounded on the west by the boundary which divides it from our colony of Sierra Leone. Immediately to the eastward comes the county of Grand Bassa, almost as large, but lacking the importance derived by the first named from the possession of the chief settlements of the Republic, as also the headquarters of the administrative and commercial bodies. If you look at the accompanying map, it will be seen that the wide expanse of country of which this important division consists is shown to be little as yet but "dense forest," "rubber forest," and so on. It is one of those portions of the territory of the Republic which have not yet yielded up their secrets to scientific investigation, which, in a word, might contain almost anything. Among other interesting features, a considerable portion of the scarcely known Satro Mountains, with the important elevation of Mount Bo, is included, as also the conjectured course of the mysterious Nuon River, which is confidently stated to be no other than the Cestos when it reaches within

measurable distance of the coast. But a short distance from the existing settlements, terminating not more than about 30 miles from the sea, our accurate knowledge comes to an untimely end and leaves us thirsting for information regarding the hidden treasures which this wide area has all too long been permitted to conceal. Next in order we enter Sinoe County, and here, along the course of the not unimportant river of the same name, are many settlements and villages whose names on the map impart an air of occupation and activity to this slumbering region. The east-central portion of Sinoe appears to be very mountainous and rugged, and is believed to contain such well-marked elevations as the Niete Mountains, Mounts Keta, Gelia, and others, some of which have been said to present peaks of bare, glittering granite, and to attain to heights of over 6,000 feet. From such information as I have succeeded in obtaining it would seem that these elevations are surrounded by forests of extraordinary density, possessing a vegetation surprisingly rich and varied, including quantities of timber trees of great value and huge expanses of as yet untouched wild rubber. It is traversed, not only by the Sinoe River, just referred to, but by a number of streams rising in the mountainous country in the centre, and flowing eastward to join the lower courses of the Cavalla River. The smallest of the Liberian territorial divisions, the County of Maryland, is perhaps the best known, and presents indications of being the richest. From its seaport, large quantities of palm-oil, palm-kernels, rubber, cacao, and coffee are exported, and, due to the facilities afforded by the Cavalla River navigation, some measure of penetration into the country has been accomplished in a successful manner. At one time, shortly after the publication of the Liberian Declaration of Independence, owing to certain causes which do not immediately concern this chapter, little Maryland, with boundless enthusiasm, endeavoured for a time to constitute herself a separate State with independent governmental machinery. It is possible that the hardy strength of purpose and initiative which her people then displayed may have animated them to an energetic

attempt to exploit their country to the point which, in course of time, has let so encouraging a measure of light into its interesting and beautiful hinterland.

Such, very roughly speaking, are the more prominent features of what is at present known of this important and interesting division of the West African coast. Of the interior it is impossible to give anything approaching an accurate description, since few have made any serious attempt to examine it, whilst the records of such journeys as have been made are faulty or not very informing. Still, it may be stated broadly that it is a dense forest country ; that, apart altogether from its stupendous rainfall, it is well watered by a large number of rivers and perennial streams ; that it offers, in its numerous bold mountain systems, a variety of elevations suitable for the production of many valuable commercial products which might be adversely affected by the temperatures of the lower levels, and that it is perhaps the least unhealthy of the countries composing what may be called for the sake of convenience the Guinea Coast. Of the country beyond the forested areas we know that it is elevated, cool, and not unhealthy. For example, leaving Monrovia and proceeding in a northerly direction, the traveller's path would lead him for many days through a forest so almost impenetrable that often the road would present the appearance of a mere tunnel in the undergrowth, at times so low as scarcely to admit without stooping of the passage of the carriers bearing his loads. So thick are the intermingled leafy branches of the high overarching forest trees, that the gloom in the paths cut through the undergrowth becomes at times almost darkness, whilst, for the greater part of the year, they reek with a never-drying, vaporous humidity. So massed are the branches of the multitudinous lower growths that, following the immutable law of natural selection, a singular grass, which I have seen in no other part of Africa, has found, in the course of the ages, that it can actually grow through them almost as it could, in other conditions, shoot upward through the soil. This surprising member of the *graminæ* may be seen waving its

highest blades over the lower bush, as though seeking other worlds to conquer, fully 25 feet from the ground, and, with care, its course through the thickly grown lower vegetation can step by step be traced, its roots being clearly discernible at various elevations. Clearings in this thick primeval forest are few and far between, and not seldom the task of preparing sufficient space for a night's camping ground is one of great labour for the already weary carriers.

The more central portion of the country, for example, if we were to describe a circle whose centre was at or near Boporo, and whose distance was the coast, would be found to contain, in addition to the depressing forest lands already referred to, not a few stretches of mountain whose chief eminences rise to heights of not much less than 3,000 or 4,000 feet, and are intersected in the rainy season in all directions by multitudes of streams which roar and boil through their rocky courses, presenting formidable hindrances to the traveller condemned by circumstances to endeavour to cross them at that terrible season of the year. From the middle course of the St. Paul River, westward to the Anglo-Liberian border, these forests are the haunts of immense herds of elephants of, it is said, three distinct species, which are greatly hunted by the entirely uncivilized natives of that region, and are said as a consequence to have become extremely savage and dangerous—so much so that they are understood to attack human beings without any provocation whatsoever.

But having passed through this dense, amazing lavishness of Nature in her must prodigal mood, having gradually ascended some 2,000 feet and left the damp, dismal depths of the primeval forest behind us, we emerge at length upon a beautiful, park-like, grassy plateau, so wide, so spacious, and so lung-satisfying, that one is seized with an irresistible longing to throw one's arms exultingly above one's head, and shout for very joy of possessing space, and light, and air, once more. Into the wide, grassy park-lands which we have at length reached, the forest, as though unwilling to relinquish its hold upon the

suffocated country within its grasp, thrusts out long, tentacle-like promontories of bush and trees as though in protest at the efforts of the agricultural upland tribes to drive the tree-growths back. Here we have an agreeable climate, with warm days and cool, pleasant nights. This plateau, although not receiving anything like the terrible rainfall of the adjacent coastlands, is well watered by a number of perennial streams, in some cases destined to become known by the names of the rivers I have already mentioned, as also, doubtless, of others flowing northward towards that long waterway which rises in the French Soudan, flows through the Ivory Coast Colony, and is variously known on different sections of its length as the Yuba and Sassandra. The plateau country as a whole is covered with fairly long grass, alternating with small groups of trees of medium growth, a condition doubtless produced by former populations whose gardens and fields have eaten into the then existing forest areas and produced the open grass country, for which, as travellers, we cannot sufficiently thank them. Here is a region perhaps more perfectly adapted to the breeding of stock of all kinds than any other in the entire western projection of Africa, and where considerable numbers of cattle, sheep, and goats are already raised by the existing tribes.

Up to the early 'eighties of the last century, Liberia had not attracted, to any extent, the attention of European business men. It was realized somewhat vaguely that the country was no doubt one possessing commercial possibilities equal perhaps to those presented by neighbouring British and French Colonies; but no person of influence in the domain of affairs had visited the Republic, and, with the exception of the often obscure and always unreliable statements made on their return from long journeys by one or two Liberians who had been sent in the later 'sixties on voyages of discovery at the cost of the United States, general knowledge of the interior remains, as we have seen, at a standstill. One of these men, named Benjamin Anderson, undoubtedly traversed wide stretches of the country, where he concluded

certain treaties, and was enabled to afford the Republican Authorities some idea of the landward extent of their territorial limits, but that is all. Unfortunately some of the names of places mentioned by him are no longer traceable—a by no means remarkable fact when it is borne in mind that there is perhaps nothing less permanent than the position of native towns and settlements. Anderson certainly mentioned centres which he stated to be possessed of fabulous mineral wealth, but unfortunately, due no doubt to faulty and untraceable data, nobody else has as yet been able to find them. An eminent zoologist of Dutch extraction named Buttikofer visited Liberia some thirty years ago, doing what he could to classify and generally shed light upon its curious fauna ; but thenceforward no further steps of importance appear to have been taken until the arrival in the country somewhere about 1903 of an aged Englishman named Whyte, who also made an ineffectual attempt, which at his advanced years was not without credit, to examine its complicated flora. It is believed that Whyte made several discoveries of more or less importance ; but naturally he was unable to devote to his investigations the energy and enthusiasm of the age at which most men devote themselves to these labours.

In 1899 perhaps the most important exploring expedition up to that time attempted was undertaken by two French officers named d'Ollone and Hostains. The latter had previously made an effort to examine a portion of the eastern extremity of the country, and his experiences on that occasion would seem to have inspired him to make a second attempt. Accompanied by his colleague Captain d'Ollone, therefore, he first made the interesting and previously unvisited Niete Mountains his objective. Thence, having for some distance traced the course of the Duobe River, he proceeded along the banks of the Cavalla until that great frontier barrier the Nimba Range was reached, having in the course of his wanderings, traversed portions of the counties of Maryland and Sinoe, a feat previously

unattempted or, at any rate, unrealized by any other European. Captain d'Ollone subsequently published an interesting account of the experiences of the travellers in a book called *De la Cote d'Ivoire au Soudan*, which appeared in Paris in 1901. Other less important attempts at investigation were made thereafter chiefly, I think, by persons unpossessed of any special qualifications, if one except the incentive furnished by money-making aspirations—at any rate but little has resulted in the shape of accurate information. For the rest we are indebted for our knowledge of the necessarily incomplete information afforded us from time to time by such persons as boundary commissioners, most of whom, beginning in the middle, leave the extremities of their subjects of investigation unavoidably and regrettably vague.



**MONROVIA FROM THE MESURADO LAGÛON.**



**SOME MORE RECENT HOUSES.**





THE FRENCH WIRELESS TELEGRAPH STATION, MONROVIA.



THE WATERSIDE, MONROVIA.



**A STREET AT CAPE PALMAS.**

## CHAPTER II

### HISTORY: THE EARLY IMMIGRANTS

WHEN, during the first few years of the nineteenth century, America at length resolved to put an end to the hideous traffic in slaves and slavery, which for centuries had lain like a blight upon the coast lands of West Africa, and the manumission in the United States of America of large numbers of these unfortunates gradually became an accomplished fact, an extremely awkward situation arose, namely, what was to be done with them. As an element in the polity of the country they were felt to be distinctly unwelcome, and as their ranks were increased almost daily by the death or voluntary action of slave-owners, the question of the disposal of the large numbers of freed slaves thus let loose in the land became one to which for a long time no satisfactory answer was forthcoming. ✓

At length, after the consideration and rejection of numerous proposals, a suggestion made by a certain Dr. Fothergill, a member of the Society of Friends in England, to colonize freed men of colour in Africa was fortunately recalled, and serious efforts, unsuccessful at first, were made by a Washington philanthropist named William Thornton to conduct the coloured emigrants from the United States back to the homes of their fathers in the African continent. It was not, however, until the formation at Washington in the early years of the last century of the American Colonization Society that the destinies of the coloured freemen of the United States began to shape themselves towards a definite ✓

ideal. This association was formed in December 1816 with the deliberate object, in so far as might be possible, of dealing with the difficult situation arising from the fact that, at that time, there were upwards of two hundred thousand free coloured persons scattered through the States of the Union who enjoyed but few of the advantages of freedom, and whose condition seemed to offer but little prospect of improvement. It was felt from the very foundation of the Society that the only plan which promised any real prospect of success was to establish a colony of freed Negroes on the West African coast where, in the land of their race, they might found in time a self-supporting community, and tend, both by precept and example, to stem the still swift-running tide of the odious traffic in slaves.

X During the year 1818, Samuel J. Mills and E. Burgess (names commemorated by the township of Millsburg on the St. Paul River) were directed by the Colonization Society to proceed to and report upon the British settlements in West Africa, chiefly, of course, from the point of view of their suitability for the purposes of the proposed colony ; they therefore lost no time in visiting the Gambia, Sierra Leone, and Sherbro Island, in making exhaustive inquiries, and in returning to Washington, Mr. Mills unfortunately dying in the course of the homeward voyage. From the very gratifying report presented to them by these pioneers, the Society felt justified in proceeding with its project, and, two years later, the first company of eighty-eight Negroes sailed for the African Coast in the charge of three white Americans named Bacon, Bankson, and Crozer, the last named being the Society's agent, the Rev. Samuel Bacon being the agent of the United States Government, sent, no doubt, to watch and report upon the success or otherwise of the venture.

In due time this party reached Sierra Leone, but, for reasons which do not concern the sequel, passed down to Sherbro Island, where they landed with a view to establishing themselves. Within a very short time, however, one after the other they were attacked

by sickness, no doubt some form of malaria, and all the Americans, together with a large proportion of the Negroes, succumbed to its fatal effects. The following year the ship *Nautilus*, chartered by the United States Government, proceeded to Africa with two Government agents on board, named Winn and Bacon, who were accompanied by two officials of the Colonization Society and a further group of emigrants, and these were permitted by the Sierra Leone Government to remain at Fura Bay near Freetown until such time as a suitable locality for the proposed colony could be selected. Bacon, accompanied by a Mr. Andrews, visited various points of the coast, reaching as far to the eastward as Grand Bassa, whose people, while consenting to receive the emigrants, strenuously declined to abandon their considerable interest in the slave trade. Soon after their return to Sierra Leone, Bacon left for America, and a few weeks after his departure Andrews and Mr. and Mrs. Winn died from illness, doubtless the result of their discouraging exertions.

Late in the autumn of 1821, Dr. Eli Ayres was appointed Chief Agent of the Colonization Society, and proceeded to Africa to take up the duties of his office, which had been discharged in the meantime by a man named Wiltberger. On board of the United States schooner *Alligator* he proceeded at once to Cape Montserrat, the site of the present city of Monrovia, with a view to obtaining land for the foundation of the colony, and after some time spent in negotiations with the native chiefs, succeeded in securing the whole of the Montserrat (or Mesurado as it has since come to be called) Promontory, which it was felt afforded a valuable and suitable area upon which to commence operations. By the beginning of the following April the whole of the emigrants had, little by little, been transferred from Fura Bay to their new domain, and in spite of much trouble and opposition from the natives, in the course of which the colonists lost the greater part of their implements and utensils, they finally made good their occupancy, although it was felt that, in view

of the hostility of the surrounding tribes, their position was one of no little precariousness. So fully was this realized that a certain number insisted upon returning to Sierra Leone, but the greater part remained on Montserrado under the superintendence of a Negro named Elijah Johnson, a man of extraordinary courage and resource. In this crisis the two white agents deemed it necessary to return to America to report progress, and to concert measures for the assistance of the small band of courageous men and women who had elected to remain in their perilous situation until succour could be sent to them.

About the time of the return of Ayres and Wiltberger to Washington, the selection was made by the Colonization Society, for service with the Negro emigrants, of one of the most remarkable men who have ever given their lives in the service of Africa and the African. This was Jehudi Ashmun. The life of Ashmun, whose all too short existence was one continuous sacrifice of self on the altar of duty, was offered—nay, freely given with outstretched hands—to the service and welfare of that small community which fortunately he had the gratification to see established upon a firm foundation before his connection with it came to an end shortly before his death at the pathetically early age of thirty-five years. With his early life and history we need not concern ourselves; it is sufficient to say that his youth and early manhood were spent in a heart-searching, self-sacrificing quest of religious ideals which nowadays, I fear, would associate themselves more with one leaning towards monomania than with a person of sane and healthy temperament; but, as subsequent events proved, there was little enough of the rhapsodist in his composition when the moment for action came. With some difficulty he succeeded in awakening the interest of the Colonization Society in the imperious call which he felt for work in Africa, and after some delay was appointed by them to proceed in the brig *Strong* to Cape Montserrado in charge of a further company of

emigrants, and with instructions to assume charge of the settlement in the event of the absence or death of the existing agents, Dr. Ayres and Mr. Wiltberger, who, as we know, were at that time on their way back to the United States. Ashmun embarked at Baltimore, accompanied by his wife, on the 20th June, 1822.

Early in the following August he reached his destination and, in harmony with his instructions, assumed the direction and administration of the small colony. He found that but a small area in the jungle which covered the promontory had as yet been cleared ; only thirty huts had been erected ; the rainy season was at its height, and no accommodation was available for the new arrivals. Added to these disappointments, he discovered that the tiny settlement possessed no adequate means of defence against the unconcealed hostility of the native tribes. No time was, therefore, lost in improving these unsatisfactory conditions, and in doing what was found to be possible to guard against those dangers which were felt to be most pressing. It took four weeks to land from the *Strong* all the stores and provisions sent for the colonists' use, the ship at one time narrowly escaping shipwreck whilst all the priceless commodities which she bore were still on board of her. However, at length they were duly landed, and steps were taken to construct suitable defences armed with five iron and one brass gun which were hoisted by dint of incredible labour up the steep ascent from the water-side to the site selected for the fort. In addition the emigrants possessed about forty muskets, but few of which were serviceable, their remaining arms consisting of a few ancient pikes and rusty cutlasses. No time was now lost in clearing as wide a space as possible round the fortification, in order to prevent sudden attack ; an armourer was entrusted with the repairs of the faulty muskets ; a small corps of camp guards was enrolled, most of whose members had, up to that time, never handled a firearm in their lives, and all other measures taken which seemed to add to the colonists' narrow margin of safety. The guns, which



had been hauled' up with such pains from the shore of the lagoon, were mounted upon rude carriages, and run out in the angles of the newly completed defences.

None too soon were these precautions taken. The neighbouring tribes, the Des and Mambas, realizing the insuperable difficulties which these American strangers would assuredly place in the way of their participation in the local slave trade, and already bitterly regretting their short-sighted acquiescence in the founding of the foreign settlement in their midst, were beginning to adopt an attitude, if not openly hostile, at all events divested of the last trace of that cordiality which had marked their earlier relations with the American emigrants. The hard-worked occupants of the now rudely defended little garrison were, therefore, compelled to undertake the fatiguing strain of unceasing night watches, a duty which, when one takes into consideration the small number of persons who composed the muster roll, proved more exhausting than any other burden they were called upon to bear, and this in addition to undergoing, at the height of the rainy season and with numbers sorely depleted by sickness, bad food, and exposure, an amount of arduous toil never ordinarily undertaken even by the natives at that time of year. Early in September all intercourse between the emigrants and the tribesmen ceased, and, more ominous still, a number of native youths who had been employed as labourers in the small colony began to desert, doubtless in consequence of the intelligence of the preparations for hostilities which reached them from their friends in the distant villages. These sinister indications were not lost upon Ashmun, who, although prostrated by his first fever, set vigorously about perfecting his preparations to meet the coming attack. Gun crews were detailed for the service of the heavy pieces, and standing orders of the completest kind published. The plan adopted was to place the five large guns at the angles of the triangle which the palisade formed; each angle of which was so placed as to enfilade two sides of the whole, as also to sweep a

considerable extent of ground in addition. The guns and gunners were protected by musketry-proof stockades, any two of which were commodious enough to hold all the settlers in the place. The brass gun, and two swivel-pieces mounted on travelling carriages, were stationed in the centre, ready to support whichever portion of the stockade sustained the heaviest attack. Connected with these measures of safety, of course, was the extension to the utmost of the cleared space about the settlement, the trees and brushwood being left lying on the ground to serve the purposes of entanglements. All these plans were communicated to the more intelligent of the men so that, in the event of the death or incapacity of Ashmun, they might carry them into effect without him, and so secure in so far as possible the preservation of the community. Rain now fell in torrents, and as though the harassed Agent were not sufficiently bowed down beneath the crushing weight of his anxieties, Mrs. Ashmun, who had for some time been in ill-health, suddenly passed away. It was well for the unhappy husband that his responsibilities left him little leisure to give way before the grief of this new catastrophe, for now intelligence was received that the various chiefs and headmen of the surrounding country had decided to exterminate the emigrants, and thus once and for all get rid of an influence which they felt boded them no good. A few days passed, spent by the fever-stricken Agent in inspecting and perfecting his works, reviewing his forces, and exhorting them manfully to face the crisis which was felt to be drawing nigh, when early on the morning of Sunday the 10th November, intelligence was brought in that the hostile forces were crossing the Montserrado River. The enemy force continued to assemble from various directions all that day, until by evening it was estimated at fully nine hundred men. These camped for the night on the Montserrado Peninsula about half a mile from the stockade. Afterwards examined, their camp presented the appearance of having been occupied by a much greater force than that represented by the figures

quoted. I feel I cannot do better than extract from Ashmun's report the account of the attack as it took place.

The most wakeful vigilance on the part of the settlers was kept up through the night. But with a fatality which was quite of a piece with all the hindrances that had impeded the progress of the defence on the western quarter, the picket-guard in advance of that post ventured on a violation of their orders by leaving their station at the first dawn of day, at which it was their duty to remain until sunrise. The native forces were already in motion, and followed directly in rear of the picket-guard. The latter had just rejoined their gun, about which ten men were now assembled, when the enemy, suddenly a front of ten yards in width, at sixty distant, delivered their fire and rushed forward with their spears to seize the post. Several men were killed and disabled by the first fire, and the remainder driven from their gun without discharging it. These retiring upon the centre, threw the reserve there stationed into momentary confusion, and had the enemy at this moment pressed their advantage, it is hardly conceivable that they should have failed of entire success. Their avidity for plunder was their defeat. Four houses on that outskirt of the settlement had fallen into their hands. They rushed impetuously upon the pillage thrown in their way. The movement of the main body was thus disordered and impeded, and an opportunity afforded the Agent, assisted principally by the Rev. Lot Cary, to rally the broken forces of the settlers. The two central guns, with part of their own men and several who had been driven from the western station, were brought back into action, and formed up in the line of two slight buildings thirty yards in advance of the enemy. The discharge of a brass field-piece, double shotted with ball and grape, brought the whole body of the enemy to a stand. That gun was well served, and appeared to do great execution. The havoc would have been greater had not the fire, from motives of humanity, been so directed as to clear the buildings about which the enemy forces were gathered in heavy masses. These houses were known to contain at that moment more than twelve helpless women and children. The eastern and southern portions were, from their situation, precluded from rendering any active assistance on the occasion; but the officers and men attached to them deserve the highest praise for doing their duty by maintaining their stations, and thus protecting the flank and rear of the few whose lot it was to be brought into action.

A few musketeers, with Johnson at their head, by passing round upon the enemy's flank, served to increase the consternation which was beginning to pervade their unwieldy body. In about twenty minutes after the settlers had taken their stand, the front

of the enemy began to recoil ; but the numerous obstacles in their rear, the entire absence of discipline, the extreme difficulty of giving a reverse motion to so large a body, a small portion only of which was exposed to danger, and the delay occasioned by the practice of carrying off their dead and wounded, rendered a retreat for some minutes longer impossible. The very violence employed by those in the front in their impatience to hasten it by increasing the confusion produced an effect opposite to that intended. The Americans, perceiving their advantage, now regained possession of the western post, and instantly brought the long nine to rake the whole line of the enemy. Imagination can scarcely figure to itself a throng of human beings in a more capital state of exposure to the destructive power of the machinery of modern warfare (!). Eight hundred men were here pressed shoulder to shoulder in so compact a form that a child might easily have walked upon their heads from one end of the mass to the other, presenting in their rear a breadth of rank equal to twenty or thirty men, and all exposed to a gun of great power, raised on a platform, at only thirty to sixty yards distance. Every shot literally spent its force in a solid mass of living human flesh. Their fire suddenly terminated. A savage yell was raised which filled the dismal forest with momentary horror. It gradually died away and the whole host disappeared. At eight o'clock the well-known signal of their dispersion and return to their homes was sounded, and many small parties were seen at a distance directly afterwards moving off in different directions. One large canoe, employed in reconveying a party across the mouth of the Montserrado River, ventured within range of the long gun, was struck by a shot, and several men killed.

On the part of the settlers it was soon found that considerable injury had been sustained.

So runs the story of this very heroic defence, and so far as can be discerned from Ashmun's journal, it would appear that there were only thirty-five Americans at that time in the settlement, including six native youths, and only about half that number were engaged. The toll of the casualties sustained, curiously enough, is not given in the *Life of Ashmun* whence the foregoing passages have been extracted ; but of the enemy who fell it is stated that a large canoe from which the dead and wounded could be seen to be taken on its arrival on the opposite side of the river, and which carried about twelve on each journey, was observed to cross ten or twelve times. Many of the dead were also

carried away along the ocean beach, whilst twenty-seven dead bodies were discovered in the vicinity of the stockade the following day.

Without a moment's delay steps were taken to contract the defensive works by excluding therefrom a number of houses, and surrounding the remainder with a high, bullet-proof stockade, the guns as before mounted in the angles. By dint of this expedient the number of men necessary for sentry work and gun-crews was greatly reduced, so that, although about half the force became available for duties other than those connected with the camp by day, every man repaired to his post by night, and the most unremitting vigilance was maintained.

Several days and nights of nervous vigil passed, and on the morning of December 2nd the second assault was delivered. The works were attacked simultaneously on two opposite sides, one division of the assailants making its way along the muddy river bank under its protection and concealment, whilst a second delivered a frontal attack. On discovering themselves they opened a brisk fire, which was promptly replied to by the guns in the angles supported by the reserve field-pieces in the centre, and that portion of the assault was beaten off with considerable loss. A few minutes later this attack was renewed, only, however, to be again repulsed, a third attempt meeting with no better success. On the other side, the blow had been delivered with still greater vigour. A large body of Des had concealed themselves behind an extensive screen of rocks not more than forty yards from the colonists' breastwork. Gradually they crept nearer and, suddenly discovering themselves, delivered an ill-directed fire and charged down upon the defences with reckless bravery. At this moment a two-gun battery was unmasked, and opened upon them with immediate and fatal effect. After a few discharges, the main body threw themselves flat upon the earth, and disappeared again behind the rocks, whence they opened an unpleasant sniping fire from the natural defences afforded them. Under cover

of this the main body rallied and returned to the attack no less than four times, being on each occasion repulsed by the fire of the heavy guns. After the last of these the Agent, observing a large body of the enemy moving towards the stockade from the westward, gave orders for the southern angle, which had not yet been engaged, to turn its guns on them. This was done, and the very numerous division was exposed to a cannonade so effective that, to the inexpressible relief of the defenders, the signal for general retreat was almost immediately afterwards sounded.

This second attack lasted ninety minutes, and in spite of the surprisingly reckless manner in which it was persisted in, it is remarkable that only three of the Americans were wounded—one mortally—whilst the indefatigable Agent, his clothes pierced by three bullets, escaped almost miraculously unhurt. The losses of the assailants, whilst severe, were believed to be less numerous than on the occasion of the previous fighting. Their assaults were made and maintained with a resolution altogether unlooked-for ; but in the face of well-directed artillery fire, of which that was their first experience, they could not drive home their determined and often-renewed rushes. The rapid firing of the guns, loaded by means of charges prepared beforehand, was attributed to sorcery, and this acted as a further discouragement. Watch was still unremittingly kept, and the following night a false alarm occasioned the discharge of several guns which providentially brought unlooked-for assistance. It so happened that a schooner laden with military stores was passing, in charge of a midshipman named Gordon, with a prize crew belonging to the British sloop of war *Driver*. Hearing the sound of guns at midnight, they stopped to ascertain the cause. On learning the facts they at once volunteered all the aid in their power, and with the assistance of the well-known explorer Major Laing—destined, not long afterwards, to find an all too early grave near Timbuctoo—a peace was negotiated, and the gallant young Gordon with eleven bluejackets remained

to see that the conditions were duly observed. This, however, was the last attempt made by the surrounding tribes to wipe out the small band of devoted pioneers whose behaviour, in an almost hopeless situation, was such as Liberians may well be proud of to-day. Unhappily the brave Gordon and eight of his men were attacked by fever and died within a month of his vessel's departure, to the great grief of the colonists whose cause they had so generously taken in hand, and whom they had greatly sustained and inspired by their bright and cheering presence.

Such is the story of the bravery and devotion of a small band of resolute men, wholly untrained in fighting and without skilled military direction, but determined at all hazards to uphold and maintain their position as pioneers in the only movement which seemed to promise them independence and freedom. The writer of this book has not seldom stood upon the scene of these encounters, and has tried to people in imagination the empty solitude of to-day with the shadowy forms of those who made this gallant defence—to look with the anxious eyes of long-dead Ashmun at the rushing sea of savage, implacable faces, each confidently anticipating the merciless massacre which was to succeed the furious assault. They are all dust and ashes now; and yet, in spirit, we take off our hats to them in token of our admiration of the superb courage and resolution which, in spite of semi-starvation, fever, and nerve-shattering suspense, they nevertheless so unflinchingly displayed. All honour to them; may the earth lay lightly on them to-day.

Following upon these stirring events came a time of uncertainty and gloom, temporarily lightened, however, by the visit of an armed American schooner which stayed for a month, assisted in placing the settlement in a better state of defence, and afforded medicine and treatment to the sick and wounded. Little by little trading was reopened with the surrounding, recently hostile, native tribes, and better feeling between them and the settlers was thereby awakened. Ashmun's

health, which had been seriously affected by the crisis through which the colonists had passed, began to improve, and a more hopeful feeling gradually asserted itself. Additional satisfaction was caused by the arrival from Sierra Leone of an ancient schooner called the *Augusta*, which, having been long ashore, was salvaged, refitted, armed with six guns, manned by a crew of twelve men under a Lieutenant Dashiell, and with some difficulty brought down to Cape Montserrado to act as a sort of coast defence vessel. This prudent and highly necessary step was taken by Captain R. T. Spence of the United States vessel *Cyane*, who was so impressed by what appeared to be the imperative duty of doing all that lay in his power to ensure the safety and well-being of the colonists, that he even purchased for them at Sierra Leone stores, timber, and ammunition, which he conveyed to them himself. He remained at Montserrado for several weeks, losing by fever his surgeon and some of his men.

A journey down the coast made shortly afterwards by Ashmun as far as Settra Kru, afforded him evidence of the prestige which, in the recent fighting, the colonists had won for themselves, the chiefs unanimously stating their desire to preserve good relations and to trade freely with the newcomers. Whilst all these events were taking place on the African Coast, Dr. Ayres, the titular Agent of the Colonization Society, having recovered his health, was directed by his board to embark at Baltimore with a reinforcement of sixty-one colonists and large quantities of stores for the use of the settlers at Cape Montserrado, where in due course he arrived, the appreciable accession to the numbers and resources of the emigrants being received with enthusiasm and delight. Thenceforward new parties continued to arrive at comparatively frequent intervals, a source of great uneasiness and no little affliction, however, being their extraordinary susceptibility to fever and tropical diseases. Of one hundred and five emigrants arriving by one vessel, all were attacked by fever within a month of landing, and but



for the ministrations of one of the pioneers—the Rev. Lot Cary, who fortunately possessed some knowledge of medicine—the mortality among these unfortunates would have been higher than it was. The difficulties incidental to ill-health among the new arrivals were further complicated by an unfortunate tendency—which manifested itself about this time, and chiefly among the older residents—to resist the authority of the hard-worked Agent and to carry their ideas of freedom and equality to lengths which threatened the most serious consequences to the little colony. Dismayed and discontented at finding that the necessity for bodily exertion continued and was, if anything, more insistent on the African than on the American side of the Atlantic, they displayed their disapproval of these conditions of life by strong symptoms of revolt. They would not cultivate their farms ; they violently seized upon the stores sent out from America as a reserve ; they threatened the Agent with personal violence, and, in not a few cases, gave way to their feelings in expressions of the most violent kind. After having borne this state of things with great patience for some time, Ashmun assembled the emigrants and reproached them in an eloquent and impassioned address, in the course of which he pointed out that their indolence had resulted in a strong prospect of their suffering famine within the next few months, but promised, if they would support him in maintaining the authority of the Colonization Society, as well as that of the United States Government, to exert himself still to minimize the effects of their folly by obtaining sufficient stores to tide them over the approaching critical period. They gave him an unenthusiastic assent, but it was easy to see that the spirit of disaffection and disorganization was already deeply implanted. To make matters worse, intrigue was resorted to, and reports were spread which resulted in the despatch by the Society in June 1824 of the Rev. R. R. Gurley, Ashmun's biographer, who was sent over from America in the United States armed schooner *Porpoise* to hold a general inquiry into his conduct of

affairs, and to report them to the board. Ashmun, whose health had again broken down, had left the colony, having confided its administration to Elijah Johnson, one of the pioneers, to whom reference has already been made. He proceeded on a visit to Bissau, a Portuguese settlement at the mouth of the Rio Grande, and thence to Cape Verde. At Porto Praia, on the 24th July, he was summoned on board the *Porpoise* to meet his inquisitor. They returned together to Cape Montserrado, and during the voyage, plans for a more or less settled system of governance adapted to the peculiar conditions of the now rapidly increasing colony were tentatively discussed.

About this time the name of Liberia was conferred upon the territory of the Colonization Society in Africa upon the motion, at its seventh annual meeting, of General Robert Goodloe Harper, whose name is commemorated by that of the chief town of Maryland County, the name of Monrovia being at the same time given to the township established on Cape Montserrado. The actual date of the resolution was February 20th, 1824, but the names mentioned did not enter into actual use until some time later.

On arriving at Cape Montserrado, or Monrovia, as for the future we shall call it, no time was lost by the Rev. Mr. Gurley in holding an exhaustive inquiry into the charges made against Ashmun, but as might have been foreseen, they were found to be devoid of the smallest shred of substance, and Gurley, who had conceived the strongest admiration for the character of the man whose conduct he had been directed to investigate, had the satisfaction of returning a report to his Society highly eulogistic of the qualities which Ashmun had displayed, and full of praise for the gratifying results to which the colony under his administration had attained. He had, moreover, the happiness of seeing confidence restored as between Ashmun and the settlers, and not long afterwards despatches were received from the Society which placed the Agent's authority on a firm and unshakable foundation.

During all this time free trade with the natives of the coast and the interior had been steadily fostered, and the best possible relations existed between the colonists and the surrounding tribes, whilst the strength and safety of the colony were greatly augmented by the formation of a corps of uniformed and well-drilled militia. The arrival of a further large body of emigrants at this juncture brought about negotiations with neighbouring chiefs which led to the purchase by or cession to the colony of the extensive and fertile Bushrod Island, lying between the Montserrado Lagoon and the mouth of the St. Paul River, as well as of a very wide and valuable tract of country upon that river's eastern bank, which it was felt would virtually enable the settlers to command the whole of the lower and navigable portion of the stream. In addition to these, an important area in the district of Grand Bassa was acquired, as well as a wide expanse round about the promontory of Cape Mount. A large passenger vessel capable of conveying eighty persons was built to ply between Monrovia and the St. Paul River settlement, whilst to strengthen administrative authority a provisional form of civil and military government was drawn up, and formal allocations of the newly acquired lands took place apparently to the general satisfaction.

About this time, although suffering acutely from the debility inseparable from an almost continuous residence of three years upon this torrid and exhausting coast, Ashmun began to direct his astonishing energies towards putting a stop, in so far as was possible, to the open and undisguised shipment of slaves which took place unchecked almost weekly under the very shadow of Monrovia. In his letters to the Colonization Society, he relates many of the cruelties and barbarities perpetrated at the gates of the chief town, and expresses a longing for strength and opportunity to put the infamous traffic down. The incidents he recounts in the course of this correspondence produced a very deep impression. Of these perhaps not the least moving is the description of a raid carried out by a powerful

native chief of the neighbourhood, who, having received as an advance a quantity of trade goods from a French slaver for which he had undertaken to pay a certain considerable number of young slaves, found, when the time for their delivery drew nigh, that he had no slaves to hand over. He thereupon fixed upon an adjoining tribe of peaceful, agricultural people called the Queahs as the victims of the embarrassing situation in which he was placed, and sent out a number of his warriors with instructions to surround their settlements and, after nightfall, to make a simultaneous attack upon the sleeping villagers. This was done, and without resistance or difficulty of any kind, the annihilation of almost the whole tribe was swiftly accomplished. After the first wild, paralysing rush, the houses were immediately fired; every adult, man and woman, no matter how aged or helpless, was brutally murdered—very young children sharing the fate of their parents—and all the boys and girls captured and driven off to satisfy the chief's debt.

So flourishing an industry had the slave trade become, we are informed, that from ten to fifteen vessels were often engaged in it almost under the guns of the settlement, and in July of 1826, Ashmun writes that "contracts were existing for eight hundred slaves to be furnished within the short space of four months." During that season, as an instance of the many disasters which overtook the victims of this dreadful business, it is recorded that at the mouth of the St. Paul River a boat belonging to a Frenchman containing twenty-six slaves, all in irons, was upset, and that nearly the whole of this number perished. This is represented in the statement containing it as one of the "lesser tragedies which are daily enacted." It was felt by the Agent and his advisers that what the colony wanted was the right—it already had the power—to put a complete stop to the slave trade within their borders, and Ashmun was deeply sensible of the incalculable detriment which its continuance constituted to the legitimate progress of the Liberian Colony. He therefore, without waiting for

specific authority, undertook a journey to a notorious slaving centre called Digby, a few miles to the westward of the St. Paul River, for the purpose of putting into practice without further delay the plans which for so long he had been maturing, and here, without any loss of life, he took forcible possession of a large Spanish slave barracoon, and freed a numerous assembly of slaves. He further bound the surrounding chiefs to an agreement to abstain from further participation in the traffic. Flushed with this success the Agent, assisted by the officers and men of two American war vessels, conducted an expedition to Trade Town, a slaving haunt of infamous reputation about twenty miles east of the present settlement of Grand Bassa, which resulted in the capture of three commodious slavers and the complete destruction of a populous dépôt. About the same time a large Spanish schooner, whilst awaiting a consignment of three hundred slaves from Trade Town, had committed an act of piracy upon an American and several other ships resorting to that port probably for the same purpose. In any case Ashmun, as Agent of the United States Government, demanded of the Spanish factor of the place the restoration of the property taken, threatening in case of refusal to destroy the entire settlement. His demand was treated with derision, whereupon intelligence was communicated by him to the commander of a French brig of war of the character of the Spanish schooner, who thereupon immediately captured her, leaving two hundred and seventy-six slaves, which were being got in readiness for shipment, unmolested on the shore. Three slave factories were in full operation at Trade Town, protected by two ships carrying eleven guns and having crews aggregating some eighty well-armed Spaniards when, in fulfilment of his threat, Ashmun, with the American warships *Jacinta* and *Indian Chief*, carrying in addition to their crews thirty-two Liberian volunteers, stood in to Trade Town where, to their great joy, they found the United States frigate *Vencidor*, which that same afternoon, and after a brief action, had captured the Spanish

brigantine *Teresa* armed with seven large carriage guns and manned by a crew forty-two in number, which was awaiting the delivery of three hundred slaves. The three American vessels, with Ashmun's force on board, agreed to act in concert, and the following morning a landing was attempted. The passage of the river-bar, which bristled with rocks, was only a few yards wide, and over this the surf boiled furiously. The Spaniards from the barracoons were drawn up on the beach waiting to take advantage of any accident to the boats, and determined by all possible means to prevent their occupants from effecting a landing. The boats, under cover of an ineffectual fire from the ships, were soon exposed to that of the Spaniards on shore, and in passing through the surf two were seen to fill. Their crews, although their ammunition was ruined, had succeeded in landing and were in the act of driving the Spaniards back from the beach when at that moment the flag-boat, containing the officer commanding the operations, Ashmun, and twenty-four men, was upset and dashed upon the rocks. Several of the occupants, Ashmun among them, were somewhat seriously injured, and some of the arms and ammunition lost, but another boat, under the command of an officer, succeeded in running safely in upon the beach, and immediately supported the first attackers. The town was immediately taken, and the chiefs warned, on pain of the destruction of their villages, to bring in all slaves belonging to the factories and barracoons forthwith. As a result, following the universal African custom in such matters, a few wretched decrepit creatures, obviously the very refuse of the assembled "cargo," were driven in, whilst the dislodged Spaniards, joined by a rabble of Krumen and other slave-trading coast people, continuously poured into the Americans an untiring if almost harmless fusillade. Every effort was made by Ashmun, seconded by the American officers, to obtain peacefully the surrender of the hidden slaves. At noon the following day, as no more appeared to be forthcoming, those already rescued were placed in boats which had been

kept in readiness, and Trade Town was fired at several points. The flames spread rapidly, until the whole expanse of the settlement exhibited one single, immense curtain of flame. When this was at its height, the explosion of a large hidden store of gunpowder took place. At first two or three slight explosions occurred, then with a roar which defies comparison, and seemed to shake both land and sea, a magazine which was afterwards stated to have contained over two hundred and fifty barrels of powder ignited, and Trade Town was swept, in one terrible instant, from the face of the African Coast.

This expedition, though by no means conclusive, was nevertheless a heavy blow for the slave-traders in what is now Liberia, its effect being greatly heightened by the action of the Sierra Leone Government in blockading their coast from Freetown to Gallinhas with the same laudable object in view ; and although complaints were made that certain of the merchants of Freetown at times violated this blockade, there can be no doubt that the more prominent among the slavers must have begun to tremble for the future of their "industry."

At the close of 1825, Ashmun furnished to the board of the Colonization Society a remarkable résumé of the progress which their settlements had reached. He showed that the provisional Government adopted had proved eminently suitable, and by no means unpopular ; that the recently acquired and very fertile lands on the St. Paul River were already being opened up, and presented most encouraging indications of suitability for agricultural pursuits. There was not one single family of the twelve hundred odd emigrants which did not possess the means of providing its members with a good home, a well-laid table, and was not the employer of native labour. Commerce was flourishing and the colony free from debt, whilst the people were daily engaged in house-building, land-clearing, and in other ways developing and utilizing their plantations and holdings. Two places of worship, both decent and commodious, afforded accommodation to several hundreds

of worshippers ; a land battery was in course of being mounted on the end of the Cape for the protection of shipping, and many other improvements carried out, whilst daily increasing prosperity was clearly discernible in all directions. In the early part of 1828 Ashmun's health again broke down, and his condition grew so serious that about the end of March, to the undisguised grief of the settlers, he was borne on board the American brig *Doris* and left Africa for ever. So ill did he become that it was found necessary to land him in the West Indies, where he spent several months. Thence he succeeded, by dint of summoning all his small remaining energy and resolution, in reaching the United States where, at Newhaven, on August 25, 1828, at the early age of thirty-five years, he died.

Ashmun's life was one of the most austere religious it is possible to imagine. His gloomy protestations of personal unworthiness permeated every letter he wrote—every action of his daily life. I do not believe that he was ever really happy ; weighed down by a ponderous, imaginary weight of sin, none the less heavy because it was so, he spent most of his spare time in fervent prayer and bitter heart-searching, convinced that his vaguely realized short-comings were so heinous as seriously to militate against his hopes of salvation. He must, in this way, have been almost insane ; but as a representative of the Colonization Society, as an administrator, and as a leader of men, his is a name which will never be forgotten whenever the story of Liberia is told.



## CHAPTER III

### FOUNDING OF THE REPUBLIC

SOME reference has already been made in these pages to the remarkable personality of the Rev. Lot Cary. To him, on his departure, Ashmun handed over the reins of administration, and he remained at the head of affairs at Monrovia until the arrival of Dr. R. Randall, appointed Agent in Ashmun's place, who reached his post during the latter part of 1828. Randall died the following year, his place being taken by Dr. Mechlin, neither of whose periods of service presents any specially interesting feature, if we omit the constant expansion inland of what we may now term the Liberian Sphere of Influence, which, at the cost of some little fighting, was pushed farther and farther up the lower course of the St. Paul River.

Mechlin was followed by several other white American agents, namely Pinney, Skinner, and Williams, during whose tenure of office, although more land was acquired and entered upon, the appearance of new emigrants, under the auspices of rival colonizing bodies, awakened an unfortunate feeling of rivalry which created for some years embarrassments both unnecessary and regrettable. The new-comers took up their abode in the Grebo country near Cape Palmas, where they appear to have been well received, and where they founded, under a separate administration, what is now the Maryland County, named, of course, after the State of the Union whence they came. By this time the numbers of the American emigrants had swelled to nearly two thousand five

hundred, and, doubtless on account of their constantly increasing numbers, the designation of the chief administrative authority was changed to that of Governor, whilst in order to meet the necessities to which a fast-growing population gave rise, a new code of laws and regulations was drawn up for their guidance. To assist the head of the Colony, a sort of Council was formed for the purpose of proposing and adopting new forms of legislation, as need for them came to be felt; but, in spite of this very restricted measure of autonomy, the Colonization Society maintained its position as the *fons et origo* of authority and reform. Still, the Colony was unquestionably progressing, as is shown by the establishment about this time of a serviceable judiciary; by the granting of elective rights in conditions practically of manhood suffrage, and by other important measures whose consideration clearly showed that the Liberians were already beginning to feel some faint symptoms of those yearnings for independence which are always to be found at the root of complete self-government.

The first Governor of Liberia was a white American named Thomas Buchanan, whose name has been given to the important settlements at the mouth of the St. John River. He had already served for some time as the head of the small colony of Grand Bassa, where he assumed the direction of a group of Quaker handicraftsmen who had arrived from the United States a year or so previously, and established themselves at a place called Edina. The beginning of Buchanan's administration was troubled by much turbulence on the part of the natives of the Montserrado County, as the western division of the Colony had come to be called, and Liberians settled upon the St. Paul River uttered loud and insistent complaint. A force was, therefore, sent against the people of Boporo—a populous centre to the present day—who had been the worst offenders, under the command of one Joseph Jenkins Roberts, whose name was destined in the future to identify itself more closely with the welfare of his adopted country

than any other name since the death of Ashmun. Roberts' expedition against the ruffianly, cannibalistic Boporo slave-traders was a complete success. Not only did his well-handled troops completely disorganize their initial onset, but, following up his advantage, he invaded the country of the attackers and, having burned the main town of the chief offender, dictated his terms of peace in such an unmistakable form that, for a long time thereafter, they remained unbroken. Wars with the Des and Golas, as well as more trouble with the slave dealers of Trade Town, destroyed by Ashmun as already related, caused constant troubles between 1838 and 1840, and much damage and loss was sustained by the colonists. The Des appear to have got the worst of the numerous encounters which took place; so much was this the case that, pending the opening of peace negotiations, large numbers of them sought safety in the territory of the settlers where, however, they were pursued by the Golas under a chief named Gatumba. This pursuit appears to have ended in a kind of massacre, in the course of which many of the ill-starred Des were ruthlessly murdered. Others were captured and carried off, and this from the centre of what had for many years been fully recognized as Liberian territory. On receiving news of these grave happenings, Buchanan immediately despatched messengers to Gatumba demanding an explanation, and summoning that chieftain to attend a conference at Millsburg. The latter returned an insolent reply, whereupon Buchanan hurried to Monrovia, and as a result of further deliberations, sent other messengers to Gatumba, none of whom returned. Further acts of murder and aggression culminated in an attack upon a mission station at Heddington in which, after a gallant defence which lasted over an hour, the assailants were driven off with heavy loss. Buchanan was away from the capital at this time, but on receipt of intelligence of what had taken place, he determined to carry war into the enemy's country without delay. His expedition, consisting of about two hundred troops, started

away from Monrovia in a flotilla of boats, Millsburg being reached in spite of alarming rumours of hourly impending attack two days later. The force thence cut its way through the forest, being compelled to abandon the artillery by reason of the difficulties of the ground they covered. In twenty-four hours they reached the outskirts of Gatumba's main town, where they were ambushed, receiving a heavy fire which resulted in a number of casualties. Behaving with great steadiness, however, the Liberian troops, at a critical moment, rushed the position, dislodging the enemy with great loss. This destructive advance continued up to the stockaded walls of the largest town, the resistance encountered, especially towards the latter part of the operations, growing more and more desperate. A general and well-delivered assault now carried the main stronghold, from which the Golas fled panic-stricken into the forest beyond, and this brought the expedition to a successful close. Gatumba escaped, but his power was entirely broken, and no more troubles were experienced in the future either from him or from his tribe.

Difficulties from without having thus been met and dealt with, embarrassments from within were not slow to make their appearance. The mission of the Episcopal Methodist Church, whose local superintendent was an obstinate person of strong and truculent views regarding what appeared to him as the divine right of missionaries to consider themselves exempted by virtue of their office from regulations applicable to less favoured mortals, now gave occasion for considerable trouble. In the early days of more than one of our African colonies we have suffered no little inconvenience from the same cause, which in some cases has given rise to much unnecessary ill-feeling. It was the same in this case. Buchanan very properly refused to allow trade goods, the property of missionaries, to enter the country free of customs duty, thereby causing intense excitement, and raising up in Liberia two bitterly contentious parties, one supporting the Governor, the other

the claims of the Church. In the midst of the controversy the Governor died.

Of Buchanan's successor, Joseph Jenkins Roberts, we already know something. His first claim to distinction connected itself with successful operations against the natives; but in addition to this, Roberts was a man of no ordinary character. A Virginian mulatto of extremely pale complexion, and, judging by his portraits, by no means unhandsome features, he had already succeeded as a trader, and was held in high esteem when the sudden death of Buchanan clearly indicated him as the man who should assume the direction of affairs in which, in due course, he was confirmed by the Colonization Society. During all these events in the history of Liberia, the small, rival State of Maryland, the founding of which we have briefly noticed, had been gradually growing in importance if not in size. At this time it also was administered by a Governor, appointed by the society in the American State of Maryland which had been instrumental in founding it, who possessed practically the same powers as his colleague at Monrovia. This was J. B. Russwurm, and although, needless to say, much jealousy existed between the colonies, Roberts' first care was, as far as possible, to conciliate and act in concert with the Marylanders in matters relating to internal policy. Among other things, six per cent. was the *ad valorem* duty imposed upon goods imported into the country, and in all probability no portion of the Government's policy hurried the Colony so fast along the road, which led to independence as the adoption of this tax.

The immediate result was that foreigners refused to pay it, or to recognize the competence of the commercial experiment of a philanthropic society to exercise the sovereign rights implied by the levy of duties of any kind. Various disagreeable incidents, including the seizure and subsequent forced release of certain infringing vessels occurred, followed by the presentation to the Liberian Authorities of lengthy claims for damages stated to have been suffered. Our own Government,

although continuing to regard the Liberian Administration with the utmost benevolence, could not, of course, countenance the establishment of these imposts in the absence of any steps taken to invest the authorities with the powers necessary to enable them so to act. The Government of the United States, when applied to for a declaration of their attitude, had no doubt good reason for making it clear that nothing was farther from their intention than to assume the responsibilities of a protectorate over the Colony. It seemed clear, therefore, that only one thing remained to be done, namely, for the settlers to take into their own hands the management of their affairs, and to ask for the recognition by the Powers of the establishment of an Independent Negro State upon the West Coast of Africa. Additional incentive to adopt this course was afforded by the action of the Colonization Society which, in 1846, finding that the offspring of its care and benevolence was now well able to walk alone and unaided, severed, who shall say with how much anxiety and regret, the bonds which had subsisted for so many years between the Colony and its founders. The Liberian Authorities, with firm and courageous faith in what the future might have in store for them, resolved, therefore, to act without further delay, and a Convention was convoked which held its first sitting on the 25th of June, 1847. On the 26th of the following month, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were respectively made and adopted, and on the latter date the Republic of Liberia came into being. The Constitution, which will be found appended to this chapter, was, of course, closely modelled upon that of the United States of America; but the Declaration of Independence is a document so remarkable for its dignity, its pathos, and its admirable clearness of phrase, that I feel I cannot do better than quote it *in extenso*. X

## DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

## IN CONVENTION

*Town of Monrovia ; June and July, 1847.*

We, the representatives of the people of the Commonwealth of Liberia, in Convention assembled, invested with authority for forming a new Government, relying upon the aid and protection of the Great Arbiter of human events, do hereby, in the name and on behalf of the people of this Commonwealth, publish and declare the said Commonwealth a FREE, SOVEREIGN and INDEPENDENT STATE, by the name and style of the REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA.

Whilst announcing to the nations of the world the new position which the people of this Republic have felt themselves called upon to assume, courtesy to their opinion seems to demand a brief accompanying statement of the causes which induced them, first to expatriate themselves from the land of their nativity and to form settlements on this barbarous coast, and now to organize their government by the assumption of a sovereign and independent character. Therefore we respectfully ask their attention to the following facts :

We recognize in all men, certain natural and inalienable rights : among these are life, liberty, and the right to acquire, possess, enjoy and defend property. By the practice and consent of men in all ages, some system or form of government is proven to be necessary to exercise, enjoy, and secure these rights : and every people has a right to institute a government and to choose and adopt that system or form of it, which, in their opinion, will most effectually accomplish these objects, and secure their happiness, which does not interfere with the just rights of others. The right, therefore, to institute government, and all the powers necessary to conduct it, is an inalienable right, and cannot be resisted without the greatest injustice.

We, the people of the Republic of Liberia, were originally the inhabitants of the United States of North America.

In some parts of that country we were debarred by law from all the rights and privileges of men—in other parts public sentiment, more powerful than law, frowned us down.

We were everywhere shut out from all civil office.

We were excluded from all participation in the government.

We were taxed without our consent.

We were compelled to contribute to the resources of a country which gave us no protection.

We were made a separate and distinct class, and against us every avenue to improvement was effectually closed. Strangers from all lands of a colour different from ours were preferred before us.

We uttered our complaints, but they were unattended to, or met only by alleging the peculiar institutions of the country.

All hope of a favourable change in our country was thus wholly extinguished in our bosom, and we looked with anxiety abroad for some asylum from the deep degradation.

The Western coast of Africa was the place selected by American benevolence and philanthropy for our future home. Removed beyond those influences which depressed us in our native land, it was hoped we would be enabled to enjoy those rights and privileges and exercise and improve those faculties which the God of nature has given us in common with the rest of mankind.

Under the auspices of the American Colonization Society, we established ourselves here, on land acquired by purchase from the lords of the soil.

In an original compact with this Society we, for important reasons, delegated to it certain political powers; while this institution stipulated that whenever the people should become capable of conducting the government, or whenever the people should desire it, this institution would resign the delegated power, peaceably withdraw its supervision, and leave the people to the government of themselves.

Under the auspices and guidance of this institution, which has nobly and in perfect faith redeemed its pledges to the people, we have grown and prospered.

From time to time our number has been increased by migration from America, and by accessions from native tribes; and from time to time, as circumstances required it, we have extended our borders by acquisition of land by honourable purchase from the natives of the country.

As our territory has extended, and our population increased, our commerce has also increased. The flags of most of the civilized nations of the earth float in our harbours, and their merchants are opening an honourable and profitable trade. Until recently, these visits have been of a uniformly harmonious character, but as they have become more frequent, and to more numerous points of our extending coast, questions have arisen which it is supposed can be adjusted only by agreement between sovereign powers.

For years past the American Colonization Society has faithfully withdrawn from all direct and active part in the administration of the Government, except in the appointment of the Governor, who is also a colonist, for the apparent purpose of testing the ability of the people to conduct the affairs of government, and no complaint of crude legislation nor mismanagement, nor of maladministration has yet been heard.

In view of these facts, this institution, the American Colonization Society, with that good faith which has uniformly marked all its dealings with us, did, by a set of resolutions in January in the Year of Our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty Six,



dissolve all political connection with the people of this Republic, return the power with which it was delegated, and left the people to the government of themselves.

The people of the Republic of Liberia then, are of right, and in fact, a free sovereign and Independent State, possessed of all the rights and powers and functions of government.

In assuming the momentous responsibilities of the position they have taken, the people of this Republic feel justified by the necessities of the case, and with this conviction they throw themselves with confidence upon the candid consideration of the civilized world.

Liberia is not the offspring of grasping ambition, nor the tool of avaricious speculation.

No desire for territorial aggrandizement brought us to these shores; nor do we believe that so sordid a motive entered into the high consideration of those who aided us in providing this asylum.

Liberia is an asylum from the most grinding oppression.

In coming to the shores of Africa, we indulged the pleasing hope that we should be permitted to exercise and improve those faculties which impart to man his dignity—to nourish in our hearts the flame of honourable ambition, to cherish and indulge those aspirations which a Beneficent Creator has implanted in every human heart, and to evince to all who despise, ridicule and oppress our race that we possess with them a common nature, are with them susceptible of equal refinement, and capable of equal advancement in all that adorns and dignifies man.

We were animated with the hope that here we should be at liberty to train up our children in the way they should go—to inspire them with the love of an honourable fame, to kindle within them the flame of a lofty philanthropy, and to form strong within them the principles of humanity, virtue and religion.

Among the strongest motives to leave our native land—to abandon for ever the scenes of our childhood, and to sever the most endeared connections, was the desire for a retreat where, free from the agitations of fear and molestation, we could, in composure and security, approach in worship the God of our Fathers.

Thus far our highest hopes have been realized.

Liberia is already the happy home of thousands, who were once the doomed victims of oppression; and if left unmolested to go on with her natural and spontaneous growth; if her movements be left free from the paralysing intrigues of jealous ambition and unscrupulous avarice, she will throw open a wider and a wider door for thousands who are now looking with an anxious eye for some land of rest.

Our courts of justice are open equally to the stranger and the citizen for the redress of grievances, for the remedy of injuries, and for the punishment of crime.

Our numerous and well-attended schools attest our efforts and our desire for the improvement of our children.

Our churches for the worship of our Creator, everywhere to be seen, bear testimony to our piety, and to our acknowledgement of his Providence.

The native African, bowing down with us before the altar of the Living God, declares that from us, feeble as we are, the light of Christianity has gone forth ; while upon that curse of curses, the slave trade, a deadly blight has fallen as far as our influence extends.

Therefore, in the name of humanity and virtue and religion—in the name of the Great God our common Creator and our common Judge, we appeal to the nations of Christendom, and earnestly and respectfully ask them that they will regard us with the sympathy and friendly consideration to which the peculiarities of our condition entitle us, and to extend to us that comity which marks the friendly intercourse of civilized and independent communities.

DONE in CONVENTION at Monrovia in the County of Montserrado by the unanimous consent of the people of the Commonwealth of Liberia, this Twenty-sixth day of July in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty-seven. In witness whereof we have hereto set our names.

MONTSERRADO COUNTY.

S. BENEDICT, *President.*

H. TEAGE.

ELIJAH JOHNSON.

J. N. LEWIS.

BEVERLY R. WILSON.

J. B. GRIPON.

GRAND BASSA COUNTY.

JOHN DAY.

AMOS HERRING.

A. W. GARDNER.

EPHRAIM TITLER.

COUNTY OF SINOE.

R. E. MURRAY.

JACOB W. PROUT,  
*Secretary of the Convention.*

He was everywhere received with kindness and sympathy. In England he negotiated a treaty of

friendship and commerce. The late Queen Victoria was greatly interested in his moving story, and sent him back to Monrovia on the British warship *Amazon*; the Admiralty presented the new Republic with a fine transport vessel and a sloop of four guns for the suppression of the slave trade, of smuggling, and other malpractices. Nor was our Government backward in according Liberia the encouragement of recognition; being the first foreign Power to send Monrovia a warship for the express purpose of saluting with twenty-one guns the flag of the newly-launched State. In addition to these advantages, practical help was similarly forthcoming. At a dinner given in his honour in London, so overcome by Roberts' stories of slavery and oppression were the late Earl of Shaftesbury (then Lord Ashley), the Bishop of London of that period, and others present, that the following morning the former took Roberts to the city, where £1,000 was placed in his hand as the half of a sum which he was to devote to the purchase, by the Liberian Government, of Gallinhas, a portion of the coast whereon the slave trade still remained active and almost unmolested.

Roberts was elected first President of the Republic of Liberia, and as soon as suitable arrangements could be concluded for the carrying on of the Government, he lost no time in visiting Europe for the purpose of soliciting, for the newest recruit to the ranks of the nations, the approval and recognition of the Powers.

Liberia was recognized by other nations in the following order: France, Lübeck, Bremen, Hamburg, Belgium, Denmark, the United States, Italy, Sweden and Norway, Holland, Hayti, and Portugal. It is stated by other writers that the reason which delayed the recognition of the United States was the consideration that, once it was accorded, Washington would be compelled to receive a coloured envoy.

Roberts' administration was one under which the young Republic flourished exceedingly. He was five times at the head of Liberian affairs, and did much to foster, in the Councils of Europe, the sympathetic



**THE HON. DANIEL E. HOWARD.**  
Past President of the Republic of Liberia.

TO VIND  
ABROGIAO



THE HON. C. D. B. KING, WHEN SECRETARY OF STATE.

interest which was awakened by his first visit. Much native unrest occurred during his last years of office, and strong measures on the part of the Republican forces were rendered necessary by serious outbreaks at Grand Bassa, and in the regions near Cape Mount. In 1857 the hitherto independent State of Maryland decided to throw in her lot with the Liberian Republic, the formal amalgamation taking place in the month of February of that year. The principal reason for this step was a growing feeling which had come unmistakably to be acknowledged that Maryland possessed neither the strength nor the resources to enable her to stand alone. This was clearly demonstrated during the many unfortunate disturbances which took place in the course of the disastrous Grebo war of 1857. Three of the Maryland Governors, Russwurm, McGill, and Prout, who had held the reins of office since the foundation of the Colony as a separate venture in 1831, were, on the whole, all capable men; but none of these had ever succeeded in breaking down the foolish and misplaced feelings of jealousy which subsisted between it and the rest of the colonized areas from the very date of the foundation of Maryland as a civilized Negro settlement. At the same time, no recognition had ever been accorded to Maryland as a separate Republic, a circumstance which added to the acrimonious feelings which at times so greatly embittered the relations between the two administrative centres. The Grebo war of 1857 resulted to the Marylanders in such serious losses in men and guns that Roberts, during one of his *ex officio* intervals, with a force of two hundred and fifty men, was compelled to go to their assistance. After peace had been negotiated, it was felt that the wisest course to adopt to secure the safety of the smaller division was to include it in the Liberian Republic. Governor Prout, who had died a few months earlier, had been succeeded by J. B. Drayton, who fortunately raised no objection to so self-evident a solution of the question.

It will be seen, by referring to the original Con-

stitution annexed as an appendix to this chapter, that the term of office assigned to the Executive Government was the short period of two years. This has since been doubled, as it was found that great inconvenience naturally resulted from convulsing the country with electoral campaigns at such unnecessarily brief periods. Roberts was called to the presidency for the last time in 1872; it will, therefore be seen that a number of other presidents held office between his various relinquishments and reacceptions of the presidential chair. Of these a list is appended to this chapter. Of these various presidents, many have displayed considerable administrative ability. At a time when difficulties were constantly arising, due to the unwillingness of foreigners to conform to the laws and regulations of the struggling Republic (especially those enacted for the suppression of smuggling and the slave trade), it speaks very highly for those who directed her destinies that, on the whole, in spite of many instances of contemptuous disregard of their authority, disputes should almost invariably have been settled in a manner which displayed great moderation added to no small amount of diplomatic skill.

President Roberts seemed to make friends in Europe wherever he went. We have seen how warm was his welcome to London; in France the sympathy which he awakened appears to have been almost if not quite as deep. Napoleon III, then Prince President, was greatly impressed by his unaffected yet touching stories of Liberia's early struggles and needs; so much was this the case that, shortly after the expiration of Roberts' period of office and as a result of the interest which he had been successful in enlisting, a fine gunboat, with equipment for a large number of troops, was the acceptable mark of goodwill which France sent out to her.

In 1860, the former harmonious relations which had subsisted between Liberia and the neighbouring colony of Sierra Leone were somewhat darkened by frontier difficulties, fomented by the action of a British trader

named Harris, who had established himself in what almost amounted to a small dictatorship over the natives in the neighbourhood of the Mano River. This man, notwithstanding the fact that he was residing upon what was at that time undoubtedly regarded as Liberian territory, declined from the very beginning to recognize Liberian authority, and, in addition to being suspected of covert slave trading, sent his vessels along the coast trading to Liberian ports with never a thought of the sums due to the Republic's Customs for import duty on the goods he landed. At length, wearied by his persistent and offensive wrong-doing, the Liberians seized two of his schooners at a point so close to Cape Mount as to place beyond doubt the question of Liberian limits of sovereignty. In spite of this, however, on representations being made by Harris to the Sierra Leone authorities which in all probability were lacking in the smallest particle of exactitude, a warship appeared at Monrovia, seized the two apprehended schooners, and convoyed them to Freetown. The immediate outcome of this regrettable incident was a serious question regarding what did and what did not constitute the Republic's western boundary. President Benson, who was then in power, visited London, but without obtaining a satisfactory solution. Harris continued his acts of aggression, but the second apprehension of his vessels was consequent on so flagrant an act of evasion of the law that no intervention was this time possible. They were, however, restored upon payment of a moderate fine. Meanwhile, the discussion on the boundary question dragged on; a mixed commission, appointed to consider the details of settlement which sat at Monrovia, breaking up without arriving at a decision. The British Commissioners endeavoured to impose their view that the Mano River should form the Liberian western boundary, although a considerable portion of the territory claimed by Liberia to the westward of that point had, as we have seen, been purchased by the money given to President Roberts by Lord Ashley for that purpose, and acquired, so



far as we are aware, without any objection from Sierra Leone.

The trader Harris now forced the entire question. In a dispute which arose between himself and the Vai people, he organized an attack upon the latter by the people from the disputed Gallinhas territory. The Gallinhas levies were defeated and pursued by the Vai who, flushed with success, destroyed one of Harris' factories. The trader instantly filed a claim against the Liberian Government for £6,000 damages. A new commission was at once appointed which met in 1879, and, after many sittings, again broke up without accomplishing its object, if we except the reduction of Harris' claim from £6,000 to £300. Finally, in 1882, the Governor of Sierra Leone personally presented claims to the Liberian Government including those of Harris, amounting to £8,500, together with a demand that the Maffa River should be regarded as the westerly limit of Liberian territory. These terms, having no means at his disposal of resisting them, the President was forced to accept, until compelled immediately afterwards to withdraw his acceptance by the pressure of public opinion, and the refusal of the Legislature to ratify it. After another visit from the Governor of Sierra Leone, which was also unproductive of result, the territories westward of the Mano River were formally annexed to that Colony, and that stream has ever since formed the westward political boundary of Liberia, whilst a large sum in cash was at the same time paid to the Republic in reimbursement of its original outlay in the purchase of the territories. So overwrought was the unhappy Liberian President by this summary settlement of the long outstanding question, that he promptly resigned office and retired.

In January 1904 the Presidency of the Republic was conferred upon the Honourable Arthur Barclay, who held office as Chief Magistrate until 1912. Mr. Barclay is really a native of the West Indies, having, as a small boy, accompanied his father and mother from Barbados, whence they emigrated together with several

hundreds of free Negroes in 1865. His career has been a remarkable one, both at the bar, whereat his reputation as a pleader is second to none in the country, and in the presidential chair, in which he displayed the most marked ability. During President Barclay's last period of service, certain reforms in the public life of Liberia, which it was felt were of great urgency, were suggested by the British Government. These included the supervision, for the time being, by skilled Europeans, of the Customs and Treasury Departments; the reorganization of the country's finances and armed forces; certain alterations in matters appertaining to the judiciary, and so on. Unfortunately misapprehensions arose which resulted in a disinclination being manifested in Liberia towards the adoption of those reforms, whereupon the British Government desisted from its proposals, and withdrew from active interference in Liberian affairs. President Barclay did much to impose the influence of Liberian authority upon the native tribes by initiating a timely and necessary series of native congresses in which the heads of the more important tribal divisions were invited to take part for the purpose of obtaining closer co-ordination in matters of native administration, as well as of securing the benefit of their views, and advise upon matters of internal economy. Much good was the immediate result. Internecine warfare, that curse of all thickly and diversely populated States, sensibly decreased; trade routes were opened, and, more important still, remained open, and relations between the Government and the natives became much more intimate and harmonious than had been the case for many years.

This admirable policy has been continued by the existing President, the Honourable Daniel E. Howard, who was elected head of the Executive Government in January 1912, and is now serving a second term of duty at the head of affairs. Mr. Howard's first official act was to extend to a large number of influential chieftains, for the first time in the history of the country, the honour of an invitation to assist at the ceremony

of his inauguration, by which they were doubtless much impressed. A considerable factor, moreover, in the success which the President has always commanded in his dealings with the indigenous tribes is his fluent knowledge and use of native dialects. Nothing, as the writer has often experienced, awakens so quickly the confidence of the African as the power to converse with him in his own tongue. Half the difficulties of questions at issue—half the distrust and suspicion inseparable in the native from the discussion of problems of whatsoever nature, melt quickly away with the use of the vernacular, a fact which Mr. Howard must often have had occasion to realize. Still a young man, and a Liberian by birth, the President was educated at the Liberia College, where so many others of his political contemporaries have likewise distinguished themselves. Passing thence into the world of politics, he quickly imposed his strong and agreeable personality upon those who were his official superiors. He filled with conspicuous ability the position of Secretary of the Treasury in the last Administration, and there can be little doubt that his occupancy of the high position which he now fills will be by no means limited to this his second term of duty.

The difficulty which the Liberian Government has always experienced in affording adequate protection to the property of persons shipwrecked upon their coasts, and in restraining the Kru and other allied savage tribes from plundering, gave rise to a serious situation in 1879, when the large German steamer *Carlos*, becoming a total loss on the Kru coast, was beset and plundered by hordes of marauding Krumen. Practically speaking, they stole every removable article which the ship contained, and, not content with doing so, set upon and stripped the passengers of their clothing and everything they possessed, forcing them to march in a semi-nude condition to the nearest civilized settlement some twenty-five miles distant. It was even said that a number of ladies formed part of this unfortunate band. A very serious view being taken by the German

Government of this incident, a warship was despatched to the scene of the outrage, which promptly bombarded and laid waste the native settlements over a considerable area. This done, she proceeded to Monrovia, and presented a demand for £900 in payment of the damage and loss sustained, a not unreasonable sum if the facts were as stated. The embarrassed condition of the Liberian Treasury, however, was such that only by the help of certain local traders could the money be found, and a threatened bombardment of Monrovia avoided. Thenceforward several other serious wrecks involving the loss of much property, due to the pillaging propensities of the natives, have from time to time taken place, two of these being of important British steamers; but the last, which occurred in September 1912, resulted in the loss of a very large steamer which went ashore at Grand Bassa and became a total loss. The Kru and others are stated to have swarmed on board of her, looting all, or practically all, of her valuable cargo. Custom, especially profitable custom, is a plant whose roots go deep down into the life of an African people, and are, therefore, exceedingly hard to eradicate. Thus the Kru and Bassa tribes have, time out of mind, claimed as a "custom of the country" that all vessels wrecked upon their coasts, together with their contents, become their property. Hitherto it has been found perfectly impossible to remove this impression from their minds, and more than once the Liberian Government have been confronted by heavy claims arising out of losses sustained in this way by shipmasters or their agents who, it is said, have at times had no small difficulty in explaining how their vessels came to be at the spot where catastrophe overtook them. The whole secret, of course, was that they were in pursuit of illicit traffic with the natives, and there can be no doubt that, even recently, much of this profitable roguery was pursued by the masters of small cargo steamers, and sometimes of large ones. In the course of approaching the coast at unfrequented points, shipmasters have on occasion found themselves, due

to imperfect knowledge of its dangers, involved in disaster great or small, and, in case of their ships being plundered, little hope could be entertained of the success of claims for compensation addressed to the Government.

### APPENDIX TO CHAPTER III

#### CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

##### PREAMBLE

The end of the institution, maintenance, and administration of government, is to secure the existence of the body politic, to protect it, and to furnish the individuals who compose it, with the power of enjoying in safety and tranquillity, their natural rights, and the blessings of life; and whenever these great objects are not obtained, the people have a right to alter the government and to take measures necessary for their safety, prosperity, and happiness.

Therefore, we the People of the Commonwealth of Liberia, in Africa, acknowledging with devout gratitude the goodness of God, in granting to us the blessings of the Christian Religion, and political, religious and civil liberty, do, in order to secure these blessings for ourselves and our posterity, and to establish justice, ensure domestic peace, and promote the general welfare, hereby solemnly associate, and constitute ourselves a Free, Sovereign and Independent State by the name of the REPUBLIC of LIBERIA, and do ordain and establish this Constitution for the government of the same.

##### ARTICLE I

###### BILL OF RIGHTS

SECTION 1.—All men are born equally free and independent, and have certain natural, inherent and inalienable rights: among which are the rights of enjoying and defending life and liberty, of acquiring, possessing and protecting property, and of pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness.

SECTION 2.—All power is inherent in the people; all free governments are instituted by their authority, and for their benefit, and they have the right to alter and reform the same when their safety and happiness require it.

SECTION 3.—All men have a natural and inalienable right to

worship God according to the dictates of their consciences, without obstruction or molestation from others ; all persons demeaning themselves peaceably, and not obstructing others in their religious worship, are entitled to the protection of law, in the free exercise of their own religion, and no sect of Christians shall have exclusive privileges or preference over any other sect ; but all shall be alike tolerated ; and no religious test whatever shall be required as a qualification for civil office, or the exercise of any civil right.

SECTION 4.—There shall be no slavery within this Republic. Nor shall any citizen of this Republic, or any person resident therein, deal in slaves, either within or without this Republic, directly or indirectly.

SECTION 5.—The people have a right at all times, in an orderly and peaceable manner, to assemble and consult upon the common good, to instruct their representatives, and to petition the government, or any public functionaries, for the redress of grievances.

SECTION 6.—Every person injured shall have remedy therefor, by due course of law ; justice shall be done without denial or delay ; and in all cases, not arising under martial law or upon impeachment, the parties shall have a right to a trial by jury, and to be heard in person or by counsel, or both.

SECTION 7.—No persons shall be held to answer for a capital or infamous crime, except in cases of impeachment, cases arising in the army or navy, and petty offences, unless upon presentment by a grand jury ; and every person criminally charged shall have a right to be seasonably furnished with a copy of the charge, to be confronted with the witnesses against him, to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favour, and to have a speedy, public, and impartial trial by a jury of the vicinity. He shall not be compelled to furnish or give evidence against himself ; and no person shall for the same offence be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb.

SECTION 8.—No person shall be deprived of life, liberty, property, or privilege, but by judgment of his peers or the law of the land.

SECTION 9.—No place shall be searched, nor person seized on a criminal charge or suspicion, unless upon warrant lawfully issued, upon probable cause supported by oath, or solemn affirmation, specially designating the place or person, and the object of the search.

SECTION 10.—Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor excessive punishments inflicted. Nor shall the Legislature make any law impairing the obligation of contracts, nor any law rendering any acts punishable when it was committed.

SECTION 11.—All elections shall be by ballot ; and every male citizen of twenty-one years of age, possessing real estate, shall have the right of suffrage.

**SECTION 12.**—The people have a right to keep and bear arms for the common defence; and as in time of peace, armies are dangerous to liberty, they ought not to be maintained without the consent of the Legislature; and the military power shall always be held in exact subordination to the civil authority and be governed by it.

**SECTION 13.**—Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation.

**SECTION 14.**—The powers of this government shall be divided into three distinct departments: Legislative, Executive and Judicial, and no person belonging to one of these departments shall exercise any of the powers belonging to either of the other. This section is not to be construed to include Justices of the Peace.

**SECTION 15.**—The liberty of the press is essential to the security of freedom in a state; it ought not, therefore, to be restrained in this Republic.

The printing press shall be free to every person who undertakes to examine the proceedings of the Legislature, or any branch of government; and no law shall ever be made to restrain the rights thereof. The free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of the invaluable rights of man, and every citizen may freely speak, write and print, on any subject, being responsible for the abuse of that liberty.

In prosecutions for the publication of papers, investigating the official conduct of officers, or men in a public capacity, or where the matter published is proper for public information, the truth thereof may be given in evidence. And in all indictments for libels the jury shall have the right to determine the law and the facts, under the directions of the courts; as in other cases.

**SECTION 16.**—No subsidy, charge, impost, or duties ought to be established, fixed, laid or levied, under any pretext whatsoever, without the consent of the people, or their representatives in the Legislature.

**SECTION 17.**—Suits may be brought against the Republic in such manner and in such cases as the Legislature may by law direct.

**SECTION 18.**—No person can, in any case, be subject to the law martial, or to any penalties or pains by virtue of that law (except those employed in the army or navy, and except the militia in actual service), but by the authority of the Legislature.

**SECTION 19.**—In order to prevent those who are vested with authority from becoming oppressors, the people have a right at such periods, and in such manner, as they shall establish by their frame of government, to cause their public officers to return to private life, and to fill up vacant places, by certain and regular elections and appointments.

**SECTION 20.**—That all prisoners shall be bailable by sufficient sureties; unless for capital offences, when the proof is evident,

or presumption great; and the privilege and benefit of the writ of *habeas corpus* shall be enjoyed in this Republic, in the most free, easy, cheap, expeditious and ample manner, and shall not be suspended by the Legislature, except upon the most urgent and pressing occasions, and for a limited time, not exceeding twelve months.

## ARTICLE II

### LEGISLATIVE POWERS

SECTION 1.—That the legislative power shall be vested in a Legislature of Liberia, and shall consist of two separate branches—a House of Representatives and a Senate, to be styled the Legislature of Liberia; each of which shall have a negative on the other, and the enacting style of their acts and laws shall be, "*It is enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Republic of Liberia in Legislature assembled.*"

SECTION 2.—The representatives shall be elected by and for the inhabitants of the several counties of Liberia, and shall be apportioned among the several counties of Liberia, as follows: The county of Montserrado shall have four representatives, the county of Grand Bassa shall have three, and the county of Sinoe shall have one; and all counties hereafter which shall be admitted into the Republic shall have one representative, and for every ten thousand inhabitants one representative shall be added. No person shall be a representative who has not resided in the county two whole years immediately previous to his election and who shall not, when elected, be an inhabitant of the county, and does not own real estate of not less value than one hundred and fifty dollars in the county in which he resides, and who shall not have attained the age of twenty-three years. The representatives shall be elected biennially, and shall serve two years from the time of their election.

SECTION 3.—When a vacancy occurs in the representation of any county by death, resignation, or otherwise, it shall be filled by a new election.

SECTION 4.—The House of Representatives shall elect their own Speaker and other officers; they shall also have the sole power of impeachment.

SECTION 5.—The Senate shall consist of two members from Montserrado County, two from Grand Bassa County, two from Sinoe County, and two from each county which may be hereafter incorporated into this Republic. No person shall be a senator who shall not have resided three whole years immediately previous to his election in the Republic of Liberia, and who shall not, when elected, be an inhabitant of the county which he represents, and who does not own real estate of not less value than two hundred dollars in the county which he represents, and who shall not have



attained the age of twenty-five years. The senator for each county who shall have the highest number of votes shall retain his seat four years, and the one who shall have the next highest number of votes, two years; and all who are afterwards elected to fill their seats shall remain in office four years.

SECTION 6.—The Senate shall try all impeachments; the senators being first sworn or solemnly affirmed to try the same impartially and according to law; and no person shall be convicted but by the concurrence of two-thirds of the senators present. Judgment, in such cases, shall not extend beyond removal from the office and disqualification to hold an office in the Republic; but the party may be tried at law for the same offence. When either the President or Vice-President is to be tried, the Chief Justice shall preside.

SECTION 7.—It shall be the duty of the Legislature as soon as conveniently may be, after the adoption of this Constitution, and once at least in every ten years afterwards, to cause a true census to be taken of each town and county of the Republic of Liberia; and a representative shall be allowed every town having a population of ten thousand inhabitants; and for every additional ten thousand in the counties after the first census one representative shall be added to that county, until the number of representatives shall amount to thirty; and afterwards, one representative shall be added for every thirty thousand.

SECTION 8.—Each branch of the Legislature shall be judge of the election returns and qualification of its own members. A majority of each shall be necessary to transact business, but a less number may adjourn from day to day and compel the attendance of absent members. Each House may adopt its own rules of proceedings, enforce order, and, with the concurrence of two-thirds, may expel a member.

SECTION 9.—Neither House shall adjourn for more than two days without the consent of the other; and both Houses shall always sit in the same town.

SECTION 10.—Every bill or resolution which shall have passed both branches of the Legislature, shall, before it becomes a law, be laid before the President for his approval; if he approves, he shall sign it; if not, he shall return it to the Legislature with his objections. If the Legislature shall afterwards pass the bill or resolution by a vote of two-thirds in each branch it shall become a law. If the President shall neglect to return such bill or resolution to the Legislature with his objections for five days after the same shall have been so laid before him, the Legislature remaining in session during that time, such neglect shall be equivalent to his signature.

SECTION 11.—The Senators and Representatives shall receive from the Republic a compensation for their services to be ascertained by law; and shall be privileged from arrest, except for

treason, felony, or breach of the peace, while attending at, going to, or returning from, the session of the Legislature.

### ARTICLE III

#### EXECUTIVE POWER

SECTION 1.—The supreme executive power shall be vested in a President, who shall be elected by the people, and shall hold his office for the term of two years. He shall be commander-in-chief of the army and navy. He shall in the recess of the Legislature have power to call out the militia, or any portion thereof, into actual service in defence of the Republic. He shall have power to make treaties, provided the Senate concur therein by a vote of two-thirds of the senators present. He shall nominate, and with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoint and commission all ambassadors and other public ministers and consuls, secretaries of State, of War, of the Navy, and of the Treasury, Attorney-General, all judges of courts, sheriffs, coroners, registers, marshals, justices of the peace, clerks of courts, notaries public, and all other officers of State, civil and military, whose appointment may not be otherwise provided for by the Constitution, or by standing laws. And in the recess of the Senate he may fill any vacancies in those offices, until the next session of the Senate. He shall receive all ambassadors and other public ministers. He shall take care that the laws are faithfully executed. He shall inform the Legislature, from time to time, of the condition of the Republic, and recommend any public measures for their adoption which he may think expedient. He may, after conviction, remit any public forfeitures and penalties, and grant reprieves and pardons for public offences except in cases of impeachment. He may require information and advice from any public officer touching matters pertaining to his office. He may, on extraordinary occasions, convene the Legislature, and may adjourn the two Houses whenever they cannot agree as to the time of adjournment.

SECTION 2.—There shall be a Vice-President who shall be elected in the same manner and for the same term as that of the President, and whose qualifications shall be the same; he shall be President of the Senate, and give the casting vote when the house is equally divided on any subject. And in the case of the removal of the President from office, or his death, resignation, or inability to discharge the powers and duties of the said office, the same shall devolve on the Vice-President; and the Legislature may by law provide for the cases of removal, death, resignation, or inability, both of the President and Vice-President, declaring what officer shall then act as President, and such officer shall act accordingly until the disability be removed, or a President shall be elected.

SECTION 3.—The Secretary of State shall keep the records of

the State, and all the records and papers of the Legislative body, and all other public records and documents not belonging to any other department, and shall lay the same when required, before the President or Legislature. He shall attend upon them when required, and perform such other duties as may be enjoined by law.

SECTION 4.—The Secretary of the Treasury, or other persons who may by law be charged with custody of public monies, shall, before he receive such monies, give bonds to the State, with sufficient sureties, to the acceptance of the Legislature, for the faithful discharge of his trust. He shall exhibit a true account of such monies when required by the President, or Legislature, and no monies shall be drawn from the Treasury, but by warrant from the President in consequence of appropriation made by law.

SECTION 5.—All ambassadors and other public ministers and consuls, the Secretary of State, of War, of the Treasury, and of the Navy, the Attorney-General and Postmaster-General, shall hold their office during the pleasure of the President. All justices of the peace, sheriffs, coroners, marshals, clerks of courts, registers, and notaries public, shall hold their offices for the term of two years from the date of their respective commissions; but they may be removed from office within that time by the President at his pleasure; and all other officers whose term of office shall not be otherwise limited by law, shall hold their offices during the pleasure of the President.

SECTION 6.—Every civil officer may be removed from office by impeachment for official misconduct. Every such officer may also be removed by the President upon the address of both branches of the Legislature, stating their particular reason for his removal. No person shall be eligible to the office of President who has not been a citizen of this Republic for at least five years, and who shall not have attained the age of Thirty-five years, and who is not possessed of unencumbered real estate of the value of Six hundred dollars.

SECTION 7.—The President shall at stated times receive for his services compensation which shall neither be increased nor diminished during the period for which he shall have been elected; and before he enters on the execution of his office, he shall take the following oath or affirmation:—

*I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the Republic of Liberia, and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution, and enforce the laws of the Republic of Liberia.*

## ARTICLE IV

### JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT

SECTION 1.—The judicial power of this Republic shall be vested in one Supreme Court, and such subordinate courts as the Legis-

lature may from time to time establish. The judges of the Supreme Court, and all other judges of courts, shall hold their office during good behaviour; but may be removed by the President, on the address of two-thirds of both houses for that purpose, or by impeachment, and conviction thereon. The judges shall have salaries established by law, which may be increased but not diminished during their continuance in office. They shall not receive other perquisites or emoluments whatever from parties, or others, on account of any duty required of them.

SECTION 2.—The Supreme Court shall have original jurisdiction in all cases affecting ambassadors, or other public ministers and consuls, and those to which a country shall be a party. In all other cases the Supreme Court shall have appellate jurisdiction, both as to law and facts, with such exceptions and under such regulations as the Legislature shall from time to time make.

## ARTICLE V

### MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

SECTION 1.—All laws now in force in the Commonwealth of Liberia and not repugnant to the Constitution shall be in force as the laws of the Republic of Liberia until they shall be repealed by the Legislature.

SECTION 2.—All judges, magistrates, and other officers now concerned in the administration of justice in the Commonwealth of Liberia, and all other existing civil and military officers therein, shall continue to hold and discharge the duties of their respective offices in the name and by the authority of the Republic until others shall be appointed and commissioned in their stead, pursuant to the Constitution.

SECTION 3.—All towns and municipal corporations within the Republic, constituted under the laws of the Commonwealth of Liberia, shall retain their existing organizations and privileges, and the respective officers thereof shall remain in office and act under the authority of this Republic in the same manner and with like power as they now possess under the laws of said Commonwealth.

SECTION 4.—The first election of President, Vice-President, Senators and Representatives, shall be held on the first Tuesday in October, in the year of Our Lord Eighteen Hundred and Forty-seven, in the same manner as the election of members of the Council are held in the Commonwealth of Liberia; and the votes shall be certified and returned to the Colonial Secretary, and the result of the election shall be ascertained, posted, and notified by him, as is now by law provided, in case of such members of Council.

SECTION 5.—All other elections of President, Vice-President, Senators and Representatives, shall be held in the respective towns on the first Tuesday in May in every two years; to be held and regulated in such a manner as the Legislature may by law prescribe.

The returns of votes shall be made to the Secretary of State, who shall open the same and forthwith issue notices of the election to the persons apparently so elected Senators and Representatives ; and all such returns shall be by him laid before the Legislature at its next ensuing session, together with a list of the names of the persons who appear by such returns to have been duly elected Senators and Representatives ; and the persons appearing by said returns to be duly elected shall proceed to organize themselves accordingly, as the Senate and House of Representatives. The votes for President shall be sorted, counted and declared by the House of Representatives ; and if no person shall appear to have a majority of such votes, the Senators and Representatives present shall, in convention, by joint ballot, elect from among the persons having the three highest number of votes, a person to act as President for the ensuing term.

SECTION 6.—The Legislature shall assemble once at least in every year, and such meetings shall be on the first Monday in January, unless a different day shall be appointed by law.

SECTION 7.—Every legislator and other officer appointed under this Constitution shall, before he enters upon the duties of his office, take and subscribe a solemn oath or affirmation to support the Constitution of this Republic, and faithfully and impartially discharge the duties of such office. The presiding officer of the Senate shall administer such oath or affirmation to the President in Convention of both Houses ; and the President shall administer the same to the Vice-President, to the Senators, and to the Representatives in like manner. When the President is unable to attend, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court may administer the oath or affirmation to him at any place, and also to the Vice-President, Senators, and Representatives, in convention. Other officers may take such oath or affirmation before the President, Chief Justice, or any other person who may be designated by law.

SECTION 8.—All elections of public officers shall be made by a majority of the votes, except in cases otherwise regulated by the Constitution or by law.

SECTION 9.—Officers created by this Constitution, which the present circumstances of the Republic do not require that they shall be filled, shall not be filled until the Legislature shall deem it necessary.

SECTION 10.—The property of which a woman may be possessed at the time of her marriage, and also that of which she may afterwards become possessed, otherwise than by her husband, shall not be held responsible for his debts, whether contracted before or after marriage.

Nor shall the property thus intended to be secured to the woman be alienated otherwise than by her free and voluntary consent, and such alienation may be made by her either by sale, devise, or otherwise.

SECTION 11.—In all cases in which estates are insolvent, the widow shall be entitled to one-third of the real estate during her natural life, and to one-third of the personal estate, which she shall hold in her own right, subject to alienation by her, by sale, devise, or otherwise.

SECTION 12.—No person shall be entitled to hold real estate in this Republic unless he be a citizen of the same. Nevertheless this article shall not be construed to apply to colonization, missionary, educational, or other benevolent institutions, so long as the property or estate is applied to its legitimate purpose.

SECTION 13.—The great object of forming these colonies being to provide a home for the dispersed and oppressed children of Africa, and to regenerate and enlighten this benighted continent, none but persons of colour shall be admitted to citizenship in this Republic.

SECTION 14.—The purchase of any land by any citizen or citizens from the aborigines of this country for his or their own use, or for the benefit of others, as estate or estates, in fee simple, shall be considered null and void to all intents and purposes.

SECTION 15.—The improvement of the native tribes and their advancement in the art of agriculture and husbandry being a cherished object of this government, it shall be the duty of the President to appoint in each county some discreet person whose duty it shall be to make regular and periodical tours through the country for the purpose of calling the attention of the natives to those wholesome branches of industry, and of instructing them in the same, and the Legislature shall, as soon as it can conveniently be done, make provisions for these purposes by the appropriation of money.

SECTION 16.—The existing regulations of the American Colonization Society, in the Commonwealth, relative to immigrants, shall remain the same in the Republic until regulated by compact between the Society and the Republic; nevertheless, the Legislature shall make no law prohibiting emigration. And it shall be among the first duties of the Legislature to take measures to arrange the future relations between the American Colonization Society and this Republic.

SECTION 17.—This Constitution may be altered whenever two-thirds of both branches of the Legislature shall deem it necessary; in which case the alterations or amendments shall first be considered and approved by the Legislature by the concurrence of two-thirds of the members of each branch, and afterwards by them submitted to the people, and adopted by two-thirds of all the electors at the next biennial meeting for the election of Senators and Representatives.

DONE in CONVENTION, at Monrovia in the County of Montserrado, by the unanimous consent of the people of the

Commonwealth of Liberia, this Twenty-sixth day of July, in the Year of Our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty-seven, and of the REPUBLIC the first. In witness whereof we have hereto set our names.

## MONTSERRADO COUNTY.

S. BENEDICT, *President*.  
H. TEAGE.  
ELIJAH JOHNSON.  
J. N. LEWIS.  
BEVERLY R. WILSON.  
J. B. GRIPON.

## GRAND BASSA COUNTY.

JOHN DAY.  
AMOS HERRING.  
A. W. GARDNER.  
EPHRAIM TITLER.

## COUNTY OF SINOE.

R. E. MURRAY.

JACOB W. PROUT,  
*Secretary of the Convention.*

## LIBERIAN OFFICIALS

## AGENTS AND GOVERNORS

Eli Ayres *	..	..	..	..	..	1822
Frederick James	..	..	..	..	..	1822
Elijah Johnson ..	..	..	..	..	..	1822
Jehudi Ashman *	..	..	..	..	..	1822
Lott Carey ..	..	..	..	..	..	1828
Richard Randall *	..	..	..	..	..	1828
William Mechlin *	..	..	..	..	..	1829
John B. Pinney *	..	..	..	..	..	1834
Ezekiel Skinner *	..	..	..	..	..	1835
A. D. Williams..	..	..	..	..	..	1836
Thomas Buchanan *	..	..	..	..	..	1839
Joseph J. Roberts	..	..	..	..	..	1841

## GOVERNORS OF MARYLAND

James Hall *	..	..	..	..	..	1834
J. B. Russwurm	..	..	..	..	..	1836
S. F. McGill ..	..	..	..	..	..	1851
William A. Prout	..	..	..	..	..	1854
B. J. Drayton ..	..	..	..	..	..	1856

\* Indicates white men.

PRESIDENTS AND VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE REPUBLIC

Joseph J. Roberts, Monrovia .	..	1848	Nathaniel Brandes A. D. Williams Stephen A. Benson
Stephen A. Benson, Buchanan	..	1856	Benjamin Y. Yates Daniel B. Warner
Daniel B. Warner, Monrovia...	..	1864	James Priest
James S. Payne, Monrovia ..	..	1868	Joseph Gibson
Edward J. Roye, Monrovia ..	..	1870	James S. Smith
Joseph J. Roberts, Monrovia	..	1872	Anthony W. Gardner
James S. Payne, Monrovia ..	..	1876	Charles Harmon
Anthony W. Gardner, Monrovia	..	1878	
(Alfred F. Russell) .. ..	..	1883	Alfred F. Russell
Hilary Richard Wright Johnson, Monrovia .. .. .	..	1884	James Thompson
Joseph J. Cheeseman, Edina	..	1892	William D. Coleman
William D. Coleman, Clay-Ashland...	1896		Joseph J. Ross
Garretson W. Gibson, Monrovia	..	1902	Joseph Summerville
Arthur Barclay, Monrovia ..	..	1904	Joseph Summerville
		1908	James J. Dossen
Daniel E. Howard, Monrovia	..	1912	Samuel G. Harmon

SECRETARIES OF STATE

Hiliary Teague	H. R. W. Johnson	A. Barclay
J. N. Lewis	J. E. Moore	W. V. Gibson
D. B. Warner	W. M. Davis	( <i>pro tem</i> )
E. W. Blyden	Ernest Barclay	H. W. Travis
J. W. Blackledge	G. W. Gibson	C. D. B. King.



## CHAPTER IV

### **PRESENT ADMINISTRATION—FINANCE— BOUNDARY QUESTIONS—LAND—POPULATION**

THE administration of the Republic of Liberia, in so far as relates to the Executive Government, is conducted by a President, who is also commander-in-chief of the land and sea forces, and a Vice-President who presides over the Senate. They are elected for a period of four years. Appointed by the President, and serving for a similar period, the Cabinet consists of a Secretary of State, Secretary of Treasury, Secretary of War and Navy, Secretary of the Interior, Attorney-General, Postmaster-General, and Superintendent of Education. The Legislature consists of two houses, the Senate, composed of eight members—two from each county—elected for six years, and the House of Representatives numbering fourteen persons from the various electoral centres, chosen for four years. There is a Supreme Court of Judicature, presided over by a Chief Justice and two Associate Justices, and subordinate Circuit Courts, the law administered being the common law of England and America. The members of the two houses assemble for the Legislative Session annually, and continue to sit so long as may be necessary. In the early part of the proceedings an interesting public function takes place in the Hall of Representatives, whereat the President delivers his Annual Message. For this event the Hall is crowded by the assembled legislators, members of the Cabinet, foreign representatives, members of the municipality, other representative bodies,

and the general public. The Presidential Message is a lengthy and extremely interesting document. It deals in detail with the country's foreign relations and policy; its internal conditions; it touches upon matters of finance, revenue and appropriations, and mentions such subjects as may be of more than ordinary interest, or which it may be considered desirable to lay before the Legislature.✓

Documents of this kind in other lands are often if not usually of a dry and wearisome character, and are endured by the audience with a set and heavy expression of intense, unvarying boredom; but in Liberian deliveries of this kind it is not the case. I have only heard two of these Presidential Messages, but I found them anything but wearisome. They were crisp, statesmanlike, well-drawn papers, and, so far from the interest which I could not help feeling in them being in any way singular, I had no difficulty in perceiving, from the murmurs of intelligent interest and the not infrequent expressions of loud approval, that the President was carrying his hearers with him. The reading of the Message concluded, presidential hospitality is dispensed with a lavish hand to the utmost capacity of the spacious verandahs of the Executive Mansion, after which edifying speeches are delivered upon subjects of local interest. Some of these discourses are perfectly astonishing models of rhetoric, phrase-construction, and point; and if at times they err somewhat upon the side of prolixity, the peroration is, as a rule, well worth waiting for. I must confess that, due doubtless to some mental defect or short-coming, I never had much appreciation for what is called oratory; but I well remember the effort of one gentleman, on such an occasion as I am describing, which completely carried me away, and produced in my mind such a reverence for Liberian speech-making as, I feel sure, time will be entirely powerless to obliterate.

The President's Message at the opening of the Legislative Session, as well as the laws enacted during the course of it, are subsequently published and circu-

lated for general information. In addition, however, to measures for the public welfare, the House, at the same time, considers applications, both from home and abroad, for the granting of concessions for commercial, agricultural, and industrial purposes. Applications for privileges or monopolies or concessions of any kind are received by the State Department at least sixty days before the Legislature assembles, and soon after receipt they are published in the official *Government Gazette*, being thus open to public discussion or objection, should any be raised against them.

The four counties of Montserrado, Grand Bassa, Sinoe, and Maryland are administered by county superintendents appointed by the President. The positions and functions of these officials closely resemble those of provincial commissioners in certain of our colonies and protectorates, and much of their authority, in the more settled portions of the country, is delegated to district commissioners precisely in the same way as in adjoining British territory, the latter functionaries acting, so far as possible, in matters relating to law and order, through the various native chiefs residing in their districts. It is hoped in time, and as the various peoples of the interior are brought more and more under the authority of the Liberian Government, that a considerable revenue will accrue to the latter in the shape of hut-tax. Sir H. H. Johnston estimated the indigenous native population at *two millions*; in fact, in one of his publications which appeared some years ago he goes so far as to quote that figure. This, of course, is the purest and wildest of guessing. The author gives as his authority, among other sources, information derived from native chiefs—surely the most unreliable on earth; but as no person now in Liberia can remember that Sir H. H. Johnston ever made any journeys worthy of the name into the interior, his figures must have been obtained from coast natives, who would naturally be quite unable to afford any accurate estimate of the numbers of the inland people. Were Sir H. H. Johnston's supposition correct, the distribution of the

native Liberians would work out at the amazing figure of about forty-six to the square mile; here, therefore, as in other portions of his entertaining sketch of Liberia, the author has unfortunately been induced to accept inaccurate information, which he does not seem to have been long enough in the country to enable him to make any attempts to verify. A much more probable conclusion is that reached by the French authority Jore, who, in a really valuable because carefully compiled study of Liberia published, I think, in 1912, mentions 600,000 to 700,000 as the probable density of the native population. But even this comparatively low estimate is sufficiently important to produce a hut-tax revenue which I feel sure would prove welcome indeed to my friend the Secretary of the Treasury. Thus, if we take, on the lower estimate, the usually accepted average of three persons to one hut, 200,000 huts would be indicated, producing, on a basis of one dollar a year hut-tax, an annual income to the State of over £40,000, a sum quite large enough to demonstrate the difference between comparative affluence and financial strain.

To deal with these interior tribes when they get out of hand, and to maintain order among them when it is restored, a force of native troops at present about six hundred strong, and known as the Liberian Frontier Force, is stationed, in small detachments as need for its presence occurs, in various parts of the country. It is proposed to increase the effective strength of this corps to about one thousand when normal times shall have returned, a step for which there would appear to be every justification if the permanent pacification of the interior peoples is eventually to be accomplished.

Even in the past year, a great improvement is discernible in the discipline and appearance of the Liberian Frontier Force. It was formerly complained that this body was everything that it should not be; and it has been sought to attach great weight to the statement that, as the force was never paid, they gave themselves up in the interior to plunder and debauchery,

and lived at the expense of the helpless aborigines, doing, in one way and another, far more harm than good. However that may have been in the past, it is, I should think, certainly not the case now. One learns that the men receive their pay with regularity out of the revenue assigned to the purposes of the 1912 loan, of which more anon. The officers of the Liberian Frontier Force are drawn from the coloured section of the United States Army, and already appear to have done much to improve the tone and *morale* of the men if, that is to say, the stories told of their former sins and shortcomings have any foundation in fact. The men composing this force, like all African natives with whom I am acquainted, take exceedingly kindly to military drill and exercises. As in the case of the various battalions of our own King's African Rifles and other native levies, there is an irresistible something in the ordered motion of well-executed parade movements which appeals most strongly to the African temperament. He probably looks upon it as he would look upon some strange dance. Even when dismissed to their quarters and believed to be resting and amusing themselves, African soldiers may frequently be found conducting small parades of their own, and perfecting their knowledge of exercises which the drill-instructor may not have completely succeeded in making clear. I have seen company drill, and manual and bayonet exercise, performed by otherwise savage Central African soldiers with an accuracy and precision, as well as perfection of movement together, which would not have disgraced any British infantry battalion in the Army List, and, still more amazing, I have heard operatic pieces and dance music by well-known composers admirably rendered on full brass bands of the King's African Rifles by bandsmen not one of whom, I was informed, understood or could read a note of music.

But to return to the Liberian Frontier Force. Major Ballard, and Captains Newton and Hawkins, lent by the United States Government, have undoubtedly done much to improve and raise the status of the men com-

mitted to them, and I have little doubt that the old stigma, to which I have referred above, may now with safety be regarded as a thing of the past.

In addition to what may be considered as the professional soldiery, there are five regiments of militia drawn from the ranks of the private citizens. I do not think from what I have seen of them that their equipment or arms are very serviceable, or indeed very suitable for uses other than those of a ceremonial character; there is, moreover, an unfortunate want of uniformity in their attire and weapons which strikes the spectator at once, and produces an effect entirely at variance with that to which a smartly and properly equipped force should aspire. There is, I think, no doubt that if attention were paid to these points, and a little more drill were performed, the militia would become a very fine body of men. They fulfil, among others, the functions of bodyguard to the President on occasions of ceremony, and in this way look so well already that it is a pity they should not look and do just a little better. For purposes of defence every citizen between the ages of sixteen and sixty, capable of bearing arms, is liable to be called upon to serve, although I do not suppose that there is any reserve in the armoury out of which they could be served with efficient weapons in the unlikely event of emergency arising.

For the protection of her coasts, Liberia does not at present, properly speaking, possess any armed vessel of importance, if one except, as one feels compelled to do, the armed steam yacht *Lark*. This yacht was at one time the property of one of the Rothschilds, and was purchased by the Liberian Government some few years ago and named after the first war-vessel, presented by the British Government in 1847, which the Republic ever possessed. As on former occasions, our Government gladly came forward to assist Liberia by gratuitously furnishing the newly acquired steam yacht with her heavy guns, rifles, bayonets, revolvers and ammunition. Although she has no doubt performed

estimable service, the *Lark*, for a variety of reasons, was not an entire success. She was found extremely expensive to maintain, and not in all directions entirely suited to the purposes for which she was intended. She has, therefore, been practically put out of commission, and it is intended, when funds are once more available, to replace her by something in the nature of an armed motor revenue-cutter. The poor old *Lark* is now, I believe, ending her days as a floating lazaretto—the only purpose to which, in the circumstances, she could be usefully devoted.

Abroad Liberia is represented, for the most part, by an honorary consular corps. At our own Court her interests are watched over by a minister plenipotentiary, who is also *chargé d'affaires* to France. Foreign representatives in Liberia at present include an American minister resident and consul-general, a British consul-general, and a French and a Spanish consul and *chargé d'affaires*, all of whom are *de carrière*. A few of the remaining Powers, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Norway, being represented by honorary consuls and vice-consuls.

There are four centres possessing the status and dignity of cities, namely Monrovia, Grand Bassa, Edina, and Harper. These are in each case provided with a mayor and municipality, whose duties and responsibilities are, however, probably not very arduous.

Putting aside the functions of the Supreme Court, whose *personnel* has already been enumerated, and whose functions are not dissimilar from such tribunals in our own lands, there exist for ordinary judicial purposes a magistrate's court and a quarterly court, the one possessing the limited jurisdiction of suit-trials for small amounts, and the other with more extended competence. Costs, which are so reasonable as to place almost a premium on litigation, are usually—in the quarterly court invariably—paid by the losing side. Criminal cases, if not of a serious character, are dealt with by a magistrate's court, whence, if the offence prove to be one of gravity, it may be remanded for trial.

before a circuit court, a tribunal resembling in many respects one of our courts of assize. By these capital punishment may be awarded. Of course, in centres not possessed of civic status and, consequently, unpossessed of a mayor, justice to a limited extent is dispensed by a magistrate (in the interior by the commissioners), but naturally the powers wielded by these are limited to the punishment of minor offences and the recovery of small debts. A singular but doubtless beneficial provision of Liberian legislature is that known as the "Homestead Law." This enables every citizen to register one block of real estate, and one item of personal property, amounting together to a value not exceeding £40. This is the owner's nest-egg. No matter into what difficulties he may fall; how darkly soever the clouds of adversity may overshadow him, that property is unassailable, and for ever exempt from execution. The remainder of the unfortunate's estate, both real and personal, may be seized and sold in satisfaction of debt or other liability, but his small registered "Homestead" is always his to furnish an asylum in times of stress, though the hand of every man be turned against him.

Let us now consider for a while the finances of Liberia, and endeavour to obtain some insight into the events which have led her to the by no means unsatisfactory position which she occupied when war broke out, and which she will, I feel sure, regain when the present storm shall have passed her by.

Debt—foreign debt—has been the millstone which for many years past has retarded the progress of the Republic. And although this burden in a greatly alleviated form still remains, the outcome of still darker days has been that other nations have come forward to show how her internal affairs might be regulated, and how, by dint of up-to-date methods, her revenues might be fostered and utilized to the best advantage, as much for the development of national resources as for the consolidation and repayment of outstanding liabilities. It was in 1871 that the first financial



responsibilities were assumed. Having struggled alone for many years in a more or less hand to mouth fashion, it was now felt that certain public works and projects of a reproductive character, as also measures of internal development, ought without loss of time to be undertaken if the then restricted commercial importance of the country was ever to be satisfactorily increased. But it was sadly realized that improvements such as those contemplated cost money, and money was, and always had been, a scarce commodity in Liberia, as how could it be otherwise having regard to her struggling past?

At that time President E. J. Roye was at the head of the Executive Government, and he was requested, after much serious deliberation, to avail himself of a journey he was about to make to London, and to negotiate whilst there a loan which was fixed at £100,000. This loan was to be secured by the revenues of the country, and the conditions he was authorized to accept included interest at the rate of 7 per cent., of which three years might be deducted, the bonds to run for a period of fifteen years. President Roye left for London, but for some reason of which we are ignorant he was unsuccessful in carrying out the task with which he had been entrusted. Two commissioners were therefore appointed to proceed to England on the matter, to get into touch with certain British bankers, and with instructions to act in concert with the Liberian Consul in London. In due time, and after prolonged negotiations and great difficulty the loan was floated, the following being the principal conditions. It is authoritatively stated that the £100,000 was issued at seventy, bearing interest at the rate of 7 per cent. as stated. From the £70,000 to which it was thus reduced, the deduction of three years' interest brought it down to £49,000, which sum, it is stated, was handed over to the commissioners. No sooner did President Roye learn of the flotation of the loan than he proceeded immediately to draw against it. Large quantities of goods were ordered by him and charged upon it,

amounting, according to some statements, to upwards of £14,000, whilst the expenses of flotation were represented as being phenomenally high. When the facts became known in Monrovia, great dissatisfaction and excitement prevailed. To make matters worse, President Roye, whose period of office was nearing its close, added fuel to the popular indignation by the issue of an autocratic proclamation extending his presidential term for a further period of two years. Rumour accused him of having converted a considerable portion of the money raised to his own use, and the mutterings against him increased in menace and volume. He had already armed an escort, which he felt to be necessary to secure his safety; but on the publication of his proclamation the overwrought citizens rose as one man, and attacked the presidential residence. Roye rushed into the street, flinging hand-grenades right and left among the crowd, who promptly brought up artillery and battered his house to the ground. The President was captured and deposed from office. He would have been brought to trial but, managing to escape, he was drowned in endeavouring to make his way on board of a steamer, disguised, it is said, as a Kruman.

Of the loan itself, for which the Republic had made itself responsible for £100,000, it will probably never be known how much actually reached the Liberian Treasury. Some authorities say £27,000, others place the sum as low as £17,900. For this, whichever may be the correct figure, bonds had been issued for at least £80,000, and possibly for the full amount of the loan. In any case, for £80,000 Liberia eventually assumed responsibility, but not until nearly thirty years of correspondence, discussion, and threats had passed by. In 1898, however, an arrangement was made whereby the country began to pay interest upon the bonds, and since then, I believe, payments have been punctually made.

In 1906 another loan was raised by President Barclay. This was for the same amount as the first one, and the proceeds were to be devoted (1) to the payment of the internal debt; (2) to the establishment of a

bank; (3) to the construction of roads through the agency of a British company formed about the same time; (4) to the discharge of somewhat imperious external obligations, and to other purposes. The company mentioned was the Liberian Development Company Chartered and Limited, and to some considerable extent, it is said, the loan was effected through its instrumentality. It was arranged, moreover, that it should co-operate with the Government in the execution of the various purposes for which the loan was floated. Unhappily differences of opinion arose as to the manner in which the funds were to be utilized; accounts were called for and, it is said, delays were experienced in their presentation, and finally the Liberian Government took the step of assuming full responsibility to the bankers for the loan and for its repayment.

The condition of the country was now a more difficult one than ever, and the burden of debt it now bore was heavy and grinding. There were two ponderous outstandings from which but little appreciable advantageous return was discernible, and upon which heavy interest had to be paid, whilst, in addition to that, the everlasting shortage of cash in the Treasury had necessitated the issue of paper obligations which, about this time, had grown into a large and increasing domestic debt. In 1909, on the invitation of the Liberian Government, an American commission visited the country to report upon the general situation, with a view, if possible, to assistance being extended to the smaller republic for the purpose of enabling her to rearrange her disordered finances and other matters. After a lengthy and comprehensive inquiry the commission presented its report and arrangements were made whereby certain banking establishments in England, France, Germany, and the United States subscribed a fresh loan of about £340,000 which was to be devoted to the complete extinction of the two previously contracted obligations, as well as of the internal floating debt. This loan was secured upon the customs revenue, an international customs receiver-

ship being created consisting of an American General Receiver, and Receivers representing and appointed by the other Powers who participated in the task of providing the accommodation. The General Receiver, moreover, was entrusted with the duties of financial adviser to the Liberian Government. The receipts of the department of customs, therefore, together with one or two less important sources of revenue, were assigned to this Receivership for the payment of the interest, and the establishment of a sinking fund for the ultimate extinction of the debt. The bonds, bearing interest at 5 per cent., in denominations of \$1,000, \$500, and \$100, extend over a period of forty years, interest being payable in London, and redemption effected in New York. Up to the present time bonds have been issued for \$1,400,000, of which \$715,000 are held in London, \$460,000 in the Netherlands, and \$225,000 in Germany.<sup>1</sup>

There can be no doubt that the effect of this loan has been to place Liberia in an almost entirely satisfactory position. It is true that the Treasury complains of being kept rather painfully short of ready money; but this, considering the financial situation a few years ago, is quite inevitable, and, however disagreeable for the moment, is a condition from which she must gradually emerge. Even at the present time, the revenue upon which the debt is secured is ample for the purpose, and is growing appreciably under the fostering and assiduous care of the Receivership, and already yielding a gradually increasing margin over and above the needs of the bond-holders which, with care, even if not very amply, suffices to cover the cost of the existing administration of the country.

<sup>1</sup> Since these lines were written the issue is reported of a consolidating loan of \$5,000,000 recently sanctioned by the Government of the United States of America. By this arrangement, upon which the Negro Republic is to be warmly congratulated, she becomes financially independent of any Power except that to which it has always seemed most natural she should look for material aid.

This was written just before the outbreak of war. Of course, with many important innovations to introduce, it was found necessary to confer upon the Receivership certain powers which would not usually be associated with such a body. The first benefit to result from so doing was the prompt payment of official salaries, bringing with it a great increase in the efficiency of the Government Departments. The Frontier Force, as already stated, now regularly receives its pay, and, on the completion of the arrangements for coast defence to be completed after the war by the purchase of a fast revenue cutter, existing smuggling will be discouraged in a manner which cannot but react advantageously upon the receipts of the Department over which the Receivership presides. Relieved of the preoccupations incidental to the control and development of the various branches of the public service which have been placed to greater or less extent under the supervision of that body, therefore, the Government has now more leisure to turn its attention to the nursing and development of its as yet small internal revenue, in which direction but little has hitherto been done. Direct taxation will probably now be gradually extended; more stringent regulations governing the importation of firearms and ammunition brought into operation, and, by these means, a period will be put no doubt to the endless native unrest which, from the earliest days of the Republic's existence, has militated so seriously against effective control.

Looking upon these advantages, therefore, and upon the various visible proofs gradually and unobtrusively making their appearance confirmative of the dawn of an era of real prosperity, it cannot, I think, be denied that what is called the 1912 loan is proving, and in happier conditions will continue to prove, in increasing measure considerably more of a blessing to the country than either of her previous ventures into the realm of foreign debt, and, whilst the provisions of the loan agreement are administered ably as at present, there is every reason to believe that it will gradually place



THE EXECUTIVE MANSION, MONROVIA.

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NATURAL HISTORY



THE BRITISH CONSULATE-GENERAL, MONROVIA.

the country in a stable financial position such as, up to the present time, she has never fully known.

The southern and eastern political boundaries of the Liberian Republic being the Atlantic Ocean and the Cavalla River respectively, no great change is to be anticipated in them; but the northern (French) frontier, and that on the western or British side have undergone, in the course of years, several important modifications, and are not even yet, at the time of writing, completely delimited. Since 1883 the Mano River has been regarded as the most westerly point to which Liberia extends; the territories beyond, consisting of the Gallinhas country and one or two other areas, having at that time been incorporated with Sierra Leone, a large sum being handed to Liberia as repayment of the cost of the land to her. In 1908 a triangular piece of country between the Mano and Moro Rivers was handed over to Liberia in exchange for an area south of the Moa River called Kanre Lahun, a substantial payment being added to enable the former to be placed in a state of cultivation and development equal in all respects to that of the latter. This exchange was brought about by reason of our desire to include in the British Sphere of Influence the country of certain native tribes with whom the Sierra Leone Colony had been in intimate relations before the Anglo-Liberian boundary in that region was definitely adjusted.

Liberians tell you that, whatever may be said to the contrary, the Republic's most uncomfortable neighbour has always been France. If we come to glance at the map of the western projection of Africa and follow the occupation, by that virile and energetic people, of the various vast expanses of territory from the French Soudan to the great possessions of Sénégal and Guinea, the Ivory Coast, Dahomey, and recently the Cameroons, we may perhaps gain some faint glimmering of the strong ambitions in the direction of colonial expansion by which, in the past, our ally and neighbour has been actuated; and although no person of judgment would for a moment imagine that Liberia has anything in



the future to fear from French encroachment, the fact cannot be overlooked that, in the development of French colonial policy, the small Republic has been a serious sufferer. Great Britain, as we have seen, has on one or two occasions negotiated certain rectifications of the boundary line it is true; but we have invariably given a *quid pro quo* either in the form of land elsewhere, a cash *solatium* or both. So far as I am aware, the eastern frontier of Liberia was the first objective of French ambitions. Since 1892 the Cavalla River has been the Franco-Liberian political limit; but, prior to that year, the lands of the Negro Republic had been regarded as extending some sixty miles farther to the eastward as far as the San Pedro River. In 1885, however, the French Government claimed that her Ivory Coast Colony extended to a place called Garraway, thirty miles to the westward of the present boundary, basing the demand upon treaties with native chiefs concluded many years before. That Frenchmen had been in Liberia from very early times is an undoubted fact, as can be gleaned from the statements of writers as far back as 1670. These, describing the pre-Portuguese occupation of the "Grain Coast," as Liberia was in those days called, refer to the statement that a company of Dieppe adventurers reached a point upon what is now the Liberian Coast, where they founded a settlement which they called Petit Dieppe. This was about the end of the fourteenth century, however, and it is scarcely likely that the French pretensions to Garraway could have been based upon so hoary and intangible a foundation as this. At the same time it was claimed that they had rights over the Grand Sesters region, to say nothing of others over Cape Mount and Grand Bassa. The situation thus became a serious one, until finally, arbitration having been suggested and declined, France incorporated the territory between the San Pedro and Cavalla Rivers, a rectification of frontier which was duly confirmed by a treaty signed at the end of 1892.

A glance at the map will show that the northern political limits of the Republic follow a somewhat

quaintly drawn course after leaving the Cavalla River until they meet the boundary of the Sierra Leone Colony. The delimitation of this frontier has not even yet, I fancy, been satisfactorily carried out, and uncertainty still to some extent prevails regarding the nationality of some of it. Difficulties have occurred at intervals since 1895, in which year an unfortunate affair took place between Liberian forces and French S n galese troops, in which one or more French officers and a number of men were killed. Unhappy incidents of a similar character continuing, Liberia dispatched two representatives to Paris in 1904 for the purpose, if possible, of arriving at an amicable settlement of these frontier disputes. The position of affairs having been discussed at great length, the Liberian commissioners perceived that the French Government desired the establishment of a frontier which seemed to make still more serious inroads upon the gradually shrinking area of the Liberian Republic, placing upon the French side of the boundary line a considerable region in the upper basins of the St. Paul and Cavalla Rivers which, up to that time, they had regarded as undoubtedly Liberian. The matter remained unsettled for several years, although nothing in the conversations which took place availed to modify the French demands. However, in 1907, President Barclay, then in office, proceeded to Europe accompanied by a distinguished legal adviser,<sup>1</sup> and again the Franco-Liberian boundary was discussed. It was now made clear, by the delimitation treaty which was submitted to them, that France, as consideration for it, adhered to her original demands. The American Ambassador at Paris, who was appealed to, stated that his Government did not desire to intervene, and strongly

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Justice T. McCants Stewart. This able and deeply learned jurist discharged for some time, with striking ability, the high position of Senior Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. His insatiable hunger for useful work, moreover, has produced, among other signal services to his country, an admirable codification of the Liberian laws as they stood before the Judicature sustained in 1914, the great loss of his eminent services.

advised acceptance. Finally, not without reluctance, the new French political limit was adopted, and the treaty signed.

Passing from the question of the boundaries themselves to that of the land which they enclose, the development of the country as a whole is, and has been in no small degree, hampered by the fact that, under Section 12 of the Constitution, no person may hold real estate unless he be a citizen of the Republic; moreover, as, according to existing law and usage, no person can become a naturalized citizen who is not an African child born of negro parents, the acquirement of land by Europeans or Americans is interdicted. This provision of the law strikes me as unfortunate and unnecessary. The development of a country is dependent upon two fundamental and indispensable factors, namely, the introduction of capital, and its judicious application under skilled direction. However much we may regret it, there is at present but a limited amount of capital in the hands of Liberians themselves. This, as I think will have been realized, is not their fault; their economic conditions having always been such that they have never found themselves in a position favourable to its accumulation. But if the country is ever to be made to yield up its riches at the call of skilled enterprise, this capital must be attracted and invited, and no invitation could possibly be regarded as in the fullest sense of the word attractive which did not afford facilities for and security in the purchase and possession of real estate of a similar character to those so freely offered in other parts of Africa. As it is, land can only be obtained in the form of a concession for limited periods, reverting on their expiry to the State. Usually, in the cases of foreign applicants, the formal proposal to occupy land for purposes of exploitation must be made to the Legislature through the channels which I have already described, and the grant or its refusal rests entirely with that body. I should imagine that few persons or associations would care to embark large sums in works of development, cultivation, mining industry, or research

whose interests were not secured on a more attractive foundation than this. Capital has no nationality, we know; whencesoever it may come its mission is always the same, namely to leave the scene of its employment in an infinitely better condition than that in which it found it. I have known other parts of the great dark continent in which, in bygone days, almost the same restrictions were placed in the way of foreign enterprise; but looking back at them now what does one see? In every case land-laws have been so modified as to enable the life-blood which the capitalist alone can introduce to fulfil its civilizing and uplifting mission, and it is safe to say that the country which shuts the door upon foreign activity is one which, especially in the economic struggles which will inevitably follow the war, can scarcely hope to keep abreast of the tremendous competition which it will then have to face. To Liberia *a fortiori* these remarks apply. When regard is had to the immense difficulties which her terrible tangled jungles place in the way; to the time and patience and labour necessary to effect preliminary clearances of bush and forest; to the appalling drenching rain-falls, which, in a few days, cover the face of the newly cleared land with fresh and rampant growths of hardy and luxurious weeds; to all the difficulties attending the solution of native labour problems, of transport, and a thousand-and-one other disadvantages peculiar to the country, one is forced to the conclusion that leases must indeed be long ones which, in conditions such as these, would hold out probability of adequate return. Personally, I have never been able to see any intelligible reason for shutting out foreigners from land-ownership. Had we done so in our own colonies in Africa, what would have been the condition of those colonies to-day? An investor must have security in his title-deeds. He must feel, in order that the best which is in him be brought to the surface, that he has a stake, and a valuable one, in the land of his adoption. By affording him this sense of confidence, both parties are the gainers—the developer by the fruits of his toil and enterprise,

and the State by the enhanced values resulting from them. When I was serving in British Central Africa in 1896, the road from Blantyre, the commercial capital, to Zomba, the headquarters of the Government, passed through some forty-two miles of silent, uninterrupted forest. I visited this colony twelve years later. I found that, sharing the general development of the country, the road I have mentioned was traversed on both sides by an almost unbroken expanse of cultivated, occupied country. Here tobacco, there cotton, farther on rubber. Many of those plantations, all of which were held on freehold tenure, were in the hands of foreigners, whilst the great majority, of course, had been purchased by British holders; but all simply exhaled a prosperity and an activity which were the direct outcome of the system pursued. Why lock up the land? A country is not denationalized when foreigners bring their lives and their money to increase its productive value; giving the one and spending the other for benefits which are by no means all on the side of the new-comer. The immediate result of land purchase and occupation is an increase in revenue. The presence of Europeans means an immediate circulation of money, much of which goes to the State in the shape of hut-tax from the labourers which the plantations employ. The foreigner's needs give rise to the establishment of a number of different licences, each paid for in good hard coin, and each a source of income to governmental coffers. Every agreement with a native labourer before a district commissioner; every transfer of land; every mortgage, or release of mortgage, every bill or acceptance brings grist to the administrative mill. That is the description one might draw of a country where exploitation was invited by a well-conceived system of land-laws. What is the picture which represents a policy of exclusion? Surely one upon which foreign capital would feel but little inducement to fix its gaze. For all that, I am a great believer in small and moderate-sized enterprises. In Africa, at any rate, the number of large associations which have attained to

financial success is certainly not great. The administrator of a very large territorial undertaking, unless he be a genius of a capacity rarely met with, surveys his duties and responsibilities too superficially to obtain a clear and guiding insight into each and every of them. Instead of two or three large, and it may be unwieldy corporations, I would infinitely prefer to see two or three hundred small ones, occupying land thrown freely open for purposes of legitimate and well-imagined development, in which payment for it was deferred, in part at least, until some specified measure of success was reached. Think of the difference such a land scheme as this would make to a country hampered with an embarrassing redundancy of fallow, unutilized territory. Imagine the feeling of confidence which would nerve a developer to greater and still greater effort when the feeling came home to him that he could look upon the Government beneath whose wing he laboured not as an exacting task-master, avid for the collection of ground-rents and careless of his inability to pay them, but as a benevolent and encouraging proprietor whose interests were wholly bound up with his own. It was for this reason, among many others, that I wrote just now of the Liberian land-laws as unfortunate and unnecessary.

The population of the Republic, in so far as relates to Liberians of American descent, probably amounts to between 14,000 and 15,000. These are established chiefly on the coast, and along the courses of the more important rivers. No census has been taken for many years, and no accurate figures can, therefore, be quoted; by dint, however, of scrutinizing the various settlements, and comparing the results thus obtained with those which have appeared in other estimates, the numbers stated are perhaps as near to actuality as it is possible in the circumstances to arrive at. But in addition to the descendants of Americans, there are large numbers of other Liberians the offspring of fusions between these and the various native tribes, and it is thought that these may amount to something like 30,000 to 40,000,

or perhaps more. Of Europeans, since the expulsion of Germans which took place a few months ago, there are probably not more than seventy or eighty, of whom the greater number are British.

Among the details of the populations of the more important centres, large and increasing numbers of educated natives of pure race, possessing no small degree of refinement and intelligence are not infrequently met with, so that the total number of civilized Negroes, adding together those of Americo-native parentage, and those of pure aboriginal blood, may easily reach a higher figure than that last given. Prominent among the tribes which have produced the more highly educated types are the Krus and Bassas. In the members of these tribal divisions there is readily discernible an extraordinary and most striking thirst for education and self-improvement, in pursuit of which they are willing—even eager—to make great sacrifices. These Krus and Bassas are fine, independent, stalwart races, very closely allied both in custom and language. Many of them have attained to distinction as a result of this craving; one of the Cabinet ministers of the present administration, as also the professor of mathematics at Liberia College, being a Bassa. Other educated natives have found much-appreciated spheres of high utility in the Legislature, the Church, and in the Government Departments. It, therefore, becomes an increasingly difficult task to differentiate between Americo-Liberians, and the numerous and rapidly growing class of natives of the various tribes who, through their educational attainments, are often practically indistinguishable from them.

In addition to the foregoing, large numbers of British Negroes occur in almost all the more important Liberian commercial centres. Many of these are natives or descendants of natives of the West Indian Islands, and some have even emigrated from far-away British Guiana. Naturally, the neighbouring colonies of Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, and Nigeria are responsible, especially the first named, for very large numbers of

natives who have settled down in the Republic, working industriously at their trades as carpenters, masons, small shopkeepers, and the like. They are a happy, contented, pleasant-mannered people, who lead, in most cases, an orderly existence. They all speak a curious form of English with great volubility, and it would, I feel sure, be difficult to dispense with their cheerily rendered services. Many of the commercial houses employ as clerks, up-country agents, and foremen educated natives from the British West African colonies, and a certain proportion of these, for reasons connected with the more efficient discharge of their duties, have embraced Liberian nationality. They are, therefore, impossible to distinguish from the people of the land of their adoption until they find themselves in difficulties, when they lose no time in having recourse to the advice and good offices of the British representatives, quite regardless of their change of national status. I think the farthest travelled Negro subject of His Majesty with whom I came into contact in Liberia, was a very disconsolate-looking Zanzibari, who turned out to have been at one time in my own employ many years ago on the east coast. He had travelled across the entire continent from Bagamoyo to the Congo in the train of a German elephant-hunter, who required two years of faithful and arduous service by leaving his follower stranded and penniless upon the West African Coast. I shall never forget the poor old fellow's joy at meeting me, which he did by the merest accident, nor the rapture with which he plunged at once into the use of long-neglected native speech, probably understood by nobody but us two throughout the length and breadth of the Liberian Republic. I took him for a time into my service; but the conditions of life, so different from those of his island home in the Indian Ocean, were not congenial. He lost all animation, grew thin and pensive, and had finally to be shipped away to Zanzibar, or I dare say he would have pined away and died of sheer nostalgia.

I cannot refrain from regarding the striking harmony



in which in Liberia the representatives of numbers of African races live, as a convincing testimony to the levelling influence of education and civilization. As one walks through the streets of the capital city of Monrovia, the faces which are not black are few and far between. At many hours of the day, you might traverse almost every part of the town and never meet a single European. Among the Africans whom you would see, some are clothed in European costume, but certainly the greater number are attired in accordance with native ideas. You will, however, if you deserve it, invariably be regarded in a friendly manner. No word of disrespect or impertinence will ever be addressed to you. Nearly all the people you pass will exchange with you a pleasant greeting. Even the small boys and girls—those delightful little creatures with their absorbed expression and big, round, staring eyes—will have a flattering "How do" for you, and with but little encouragement will place a confiding hand in yours and accompany you for a few yards upon your way. In other countries, such friendly manifestations, if they were proffered at all, would be but a preliminary to demands for "baksheesh" or other form of begging; but here this is not the case. They appear to arise from an unmingled spirit of good-heartedness; from a desire that you should know that your presence gives pleasure, and are surely indicative of a good feeling which should receive every encouragement.

## CHAPTER V

### LIBERIA AS A PRODUCER—SOILS—AGRICULTURE—MINERALS—CATTLE—LABOUR

IN the early days of the colonization of Liberia under Ashmun, great difficulty was experienced by that far-sighted administrator in convincing the people that their only hope of successfully placing themselves in a position of independent prosperity lay in the cultivation of their lands and the development, on practical lines, of the country's agricultural resources. In an appendix to his work on Ashmun's life, the Rev. R. R. Gurley presents a remarkable document which the former had drawn up and published to serve as a guide to the farmer in the preparation and laying out of his farm and holdings. It is a complete *vade mecum* containing the fullest and most exhaustive information upon clearing, planting, harvesting, seasons, and approved methods of husbandry as then understood, and must have cost the compiler an immense amount of labour, observation, and pains. I dare say that much of the activity which was expended upon the St. Paul River and elsewhere, about the middle of the nineteenth century, was largely the outcome of Ashmun's energetic encouragement, aided by the admirable advice which this lengthy and valuable monograph on local farming afforded to the often unskilled and ignorant settlers. The result was that, about the period mentioned, very considerable progress was made in the cultivation of several valuable products for which the soils, which we will now briefly consider, would appear to have been singularly suitable.

There are a variety of soils which depend for their quality, as elsewhere, upon the precise localities wherein they occur. Thus, on what may be described as the coast-belt, there are but two varieties. The first of these, a strong, dark, organic mould, is found near or between the hard, brown laterite rocks of the seaboard. Nothing could exceed its fertility and productiveness. It is, however, I should think, essentially a wet-season soil, and would probably not carry its fecund properties much beyond the close of the rains in October. Another more or less upland soil is of reddish, argillaceous body, not wholly unmixed with decayed organic matter, but much intermingled with gravel and small stones. The redness it displays is largely caused by the oxidation of the particles of iron ore of which it is full. In the lower elevations there are three splendidly productive soils. The first and richest is a glorious black leaf-mould, which is common on the banks of the rivers and on the tree-covered plains. It is a perfect organic humus, apparently wholly free from gravel or stone admixture, and capable of producing in the greatest luxuriance almost any crop requiring an exceedingly rich and nutritious soil. Found also exclusively in the lower levels, but not near the more important waterways, a rather stiff clayey soil of light colour, slightly intermixed with sand, occurs. Under the influence of dry weather it grows extremely hard, vast, cavernous cracks appearing in the surface, whilst, due to the same cause, rain-water runs quickly off it before it can benefit much from the occasional showers which raise the drooping spirits of plantations in the latter portion of the dry season. This soil, however, is far from unfertile, and manured with wood ashes, produces excellent crops of maize, millet, and other native produce. It should, moreover, prove highly suitable for sugar-cane, and some species of cottons. Near the coast a light, friable, sandy soil is fairly general; organic matter is here scanty, but it would be impossible to imagine a more admirable producer of coconut-palms, cassava, and other food-stuffs.

Turning from the soils to the commodities they produce, we will first consider the now well-known and highly appreciated plant which produces Liberian coffee. This is a straight-growing, evergreen, indigenous tree, fifteen feet or more in height. It flourishes without any attention all over the country, and in size and general appearance is not unlike the native coffee of Quelimane and other centres of Portuguese East Africa, with the exception that the "cherry" containing the coffee beans at maturity is quite black. The crop is ready about the end of February, and it is stated that the yield for the current year is expected to be a phenomenally good one. The flavour of Liberian coffee, which for several years greatly improves by keeping in a cool, dry place, is so extremely full and delicious as to have obtained for it an almost world-wide reputation, and it might be supposed that this appreciable quality would have sufficed to create for it a demand which would have placed immense areas of the country under cultivation. This, unfortunately, is not the case. I am unable to say, for such details are not procurable, the actual acreage at present producing coffee; but the output for the three or four years preceding the war has averaged about 1,700,000 lb., valued at something near £42,000. The present price of this product, as paid by the exporter to the producer, is about 5½d. per pound, a poor return when, within the recollection of many, it realized for many years rarely less than 1s. 3d. for that quantity. But the value of Liberian coffee is much greater than the small price for which it now changes hands in its country of origin, and the coffee-growers would assuredly be able to demand a considerably higher price if more care were exercised in preparing it for the market. Until five or six years ago, the coffee was hulled by terrible mills which reminded you of nothing so much as an upper and a nether mill-stone, for that is exactly what they were. To a coffee-planter equipped with a modern installation, it would have been nothing short of agonizing to see the tender, valuable beans from his cherished trees

treated with such unthinkable cruelty, and broken and chipped until they were wellnigh shapeless with dire effect upon their market value. This is, however, gradually improving. A water-power plant was installed by one of the local mission organizations in 1911 with encouraging results, and an iron mill and winnowing machine have been successfully tried ; but the outcome of the adoption of these two contrivances has naturally not sufficed to affect the crop as a whole, and the more recent prices are probably among the lowest to which Liberian coffee has ever declined. I am of opinion that, when regard is had to the fact that this article is without question equal to any other imported into Europe, and superior to most, and when it is borne in mind that the plantations are much nearer to that continent than those of any other producing country, it would be of extreme interest, even in the face of the present enormous Brazilian production and output, to acquire a small plantation in Liberia, introduce into it modern machinery, and send to the London Commercial Sale Rooms a few parcels of perfectly cured, perfectly hulled, and perfectly packed Liberian coffee. I am convinced that if this were done, the price would at once begin to recover, and while, of course, the experiment could only be undertaken under the supervision of experienced European planters, it seems almost worth the expense involved. Coffee was at one time quite the leading and most profitable export ; but in these days of oil and oil-seeds, its place has been almost completely usurped by the product of the oil palm, and at present palm oil and palm kernels, from which the oil is extracted, form together perhaps the most valuable item in the list of exported products. The oil palm is a fine majestic growth, rising to a height of fifty feet or more. I do not know whether it was brought over the Eocene bridge which, we are told, at one time united the African continent with that of South America, or whether the foot-passengers who came over this convenient means of communication discovered it when they reached the bridge's eastern extremity, and passed through the turn-

stiles ; be this as it may, they lost no time in finding that it contained an indispensable article of food, and as such it has retained its place in their estimation from that day to this. The whole of the Liberian coast lands, extending far back into the forests, contain immense quantities of oil palms, which are readily distinguished by their feathery frondure and clusters of fruit. In addition to yielding in its oil an unfailing source of nutritious native food, the trunk is often tapped for palm-wine, an intoxicating beverage much esteemed by the coast negro. But since the value of the oil of the oil palm came to be realized some seventy or eighty years ago, this important growth has come to be regarded throughout West Africa as a primary source of wealth, and the output of oil has grown enormously in recent years. The palms produce, it is estimated, about a gallon of oil a year, or perhaps a little more, which is produced by some such process as the following : The fruit, which is of bright vermilion, or, more rarely, yellow, is cut down and thrown into large trenches, where it remains until it begins to decay. At this stage it is taken out and placed in a wooden mortar and well pounded to loosen the husk, being afterwards transferred to large clay vats filled with water in which women tread out the semi-liquid oil, which rises to the surface. When it appears that the oil surrounding the kernel or pericarp has been removed by these means, it is collected from the surface of the water in the vat, and boiled to free it from watery admixture. It is then transported to the coast for sale to the dealers. The kernels contain a still finer oil, and are shipped to Europe for cracking, a process requiring special machinery. Of course in Liberia, where real property may not, as we have seen in a preceding chapter, be acquired by foreigners, oil-palm estates do not exist. The palms occur in immense numbers, but no attempt is made to conserve and increase them by the methods adopted in other parts of West Africa. But if we were to turn, as an illustration of what might be done in Liberia if the land-purchase difficulty were removed, to some of

the neighbouring colonies, we should find that oil-palm estates of moderate dimensions there contain from nine thousand to ten thousand palms. Before the outbreak of the European War, the market price of palm oil fluctuated between £24 and £25 per ton. On the basis, therefore, that each palm produced annually about a gallon of oil (250 gallons equalling one ton), the yield of such a plantation would be valued at £1,000 or thereabouts, less, of course, cost of shipment, which might amount to rather less than twenty-five per cent. As it is, the oil and kernels are brought in by the natives and sold to the European merchants, the prices paid being about 6s. per bushel for kernels and 1s. to 1s. 4d. per gallon for oil. Unfortunately, due to the crude and dirty methods employed in its preparation, the latter does not realize the best prices on arrival in Europe ; still, in spite of this, the profits are far from unremunerative.

The only other palm product obtained from Liberia is that valuable fibre—of which, I believe, this portion of the West Coast was the original exporting centre—obtained from the fronds of the raphia palm, and called piassava, largely utilized in the manufacture of brooms, brushes, and similar articles. The preparation of this product is entirely in the hands of the natives, who bring it in for sale to the exporters established in the small coast ports, by whom it is purchased at the rate of about a farthing a pound. Its market value ranged before the war from £10 to £15 per ton, which would seem, at that time, to leave a satisfactory margin of profit.

But although it exists all over the Liberian seaboard, a beautiful, graceful intruder from the islands of the South Pacific, nothing has as yet been done systematically to cultivate that glorious palm the coco-nut. I have never seen the coco-nut palm grow to greater luxuriance or productiveness than it does in Liberia, and why, during all these years, it has been treated with such callous neglect entirely passes my comprehension. Putting aside its many charms of grace and form and

colour, the cultivation of coco-nuts is an industry which, on the eastern coast of the African continent, is one which has absorbed the capital of important companies, and riveted the attention of numberless experts for many years past. From what I have seen of actual results, however, I am of opinion that the palm is quite as productive here, grows better and more rapidly than is the case in East Africa, whilst what it would attain to were its growth fostered by the care and attention which are there lavished upon it, I can very well imagine.

It seems almost unnecessary to remind my readers that the chief and most valuable of the ninety odd articles of general utility which the coco-nut palm yields is that known as copra, which is the dried flesh of the kernel so dear to us in our younger days, and in curries and other seductive eastern dishes, so disastrous to our livers as the years pass on. Copra is one of those necessities of life for which it is almost safe to say that the supply will never equal the demand. From the oil expressed from it soap, candles, and the finer lubricants have for years been manufactured in increasing quantities, in direct ratio as the world's supply of animal fats became insufficient for those purposes to which they had been so long devoted. Since—I think in Marseilles—the means were discovered of clarifying the oil extracted from copra, and making it tasteless and odourless ; since it became an indispensable ingredient in the manufacture of cooking fats, margarine, confectionery, and all sorts of emollients, to say nothing of glycerine ; since the outer husk of the nut was discovered to be manufacturable into a fibrous coir familiar to everybody whose eyes fall from time to time upon the door-mat, or the household scrubbing brushes ; since, I say, all these beneficent discoveries have been made, and the uses of the coco-nut palm multiplied, the splendid growth has advanced in estimation, even as the market prices of its products have increased by leaps and bounds. The quantity of the dried kernel of the coco-nut imported into Europe in normal times, from almost every tropical corner of the earth's surface, is



perfectly stupendous, whilst the rise in prices has been fully proportionate to the ever increasing demand. It has risen in the last few years from £10 to £32 per ton, and there is no reason to suppose that the high-water mark has even yet been anything like reached. Naturally the profits are very large when once the palms arrive at the bearing stage, which they do after about eight years, continuing thenceforward to produce their wealth of copra without intermission for from eighty to one hundred years. I have seen an estimate, which my knowledge of this industry enables me to pronounce reliable, stating that, planted in accordance with modern methods, an estate of five thousand acres should and does produce an annual profit of from £6 to £7 per acre, the cost of bringing such a property to its full productive stage being somewhat less than one year's income when the palms have arrived at maturity. In the grounds of the British Consulate-General at Monrovia, there is a coco-nut palm which may possibly be about seven years old, but is obviously not yet quite mature. Upon this, as I write, there are over one hundred well-grown coco-nuts in all respects as fine as any I have seen from the plantations in East Africa. Coco-nuts flourish all along the Liberian coast, where they have been planted in the past without any regard to method, or to the value of the copra they produce. There is ample space at almost any point of the seaboard of the Republic for the establishment of large and lucrative plantations, and those who may desire to ascertain in a rudimentary form how these palms may be established upon a profitable basis, may obtain an outline of the methods usually pursued from my book *Zambezia*.

We now come to rubber. From its immense rainfall, added to its tropical climate, Liberia should be the greatest rubber-producing country in Africa; but, unfortunately, she has not yet reached that desirable position. As will be seen in my chapter on the country's flora, a large number of rubber-yielding trees and vines are indigenous to, and grow profusely in, the

tremendous forests by which the face of the country is covered, whilst Para rubber (*Hevea*) has been cultivated on a considerable scale by a British association called the Liberian Rubber Corporation Limited, which possesses large plantations near Monrovia, together with the official supervision of the collection of the rubber royalties throughout the Republic. This important company was established in 1904, and thenceforward, for a number of years, pursued the policy of opening up collecting stations for the product of the indigenous rubber-producing plants with satisfactory results until the ruinous fall in prices which took place four or five years ago caused them temporarily to suspend this branch of their activities. This company's plantation at Mount Barclay, ten miles distant from the capital, possessed in 1914 about 1,100 acres actually under rubber, and containing approximately 135,000 trees of which some 20,000 were tapped during that year, 50,000 in 1915, the entire plantation coming into bearing the following year.

According to the information which has been supplied to me by a British official who has travelled extensively in the interior of Liberia, the method of collecting the country's indigenous rubber which is pursued by the natives is somewhat as follows: On a tree being selected, it is tapped by means of the cutting of an irregular incision in its bark. The latex or milk which immediately commences to flow—and which is, of course, the rubber—is allowed to collect in a jar or tin or other receptacle placed to catch it. Unlike some of the vine rubbers, coagulation is attended by some little difficulty, and necessitates the exercise of considerable care in order to exclude dirt, water, and other foreign matter. When a sufficient quantity has been obtained, the thickening is effected by boiling, when the product assumes the appearance and consistency of a nasty, sticky mass, which is then smoke-dried and made ready for the agents of the Rubber Corporation. In some few cases coagulation is hastened by the employment of certain acids. Collection is usually undertaken

during the period between the months of September and March, the remuneration of the native rubber collector averaging 9d. per day with an addition of 3d. for the provision of food. The men so employed often disappear into the forest for several weeks at a time, and on their return receive for the fruits of their industry, which may amount to anything from a few pounds only to half a hundredweight or more, about 1s. per pound paid either in cash or trade goods. Rubber collecting is said to be an extremely popular form of employment, partly due to the fact that there is far less labour entailed in it than in gathering heavy bunches of palm kernels and transforming them into palm oil, and partly because each individual is free from supervision during the period of his absence in the bush. By the authority quoted, the interesting statement is made that the collection of wild rubber is eagerly undertaken by such comparatively civilized races as the Mandingos, Mendis, Golas, and Vai ; in fact the first two named employ large numbers of the interior tribes in a continual search for rubber in portions of the country where neither Europeans nor civilized natives would be allowed to enter except at the risk of death in the case of the former or, in that of the latter, almost certain sale into slavery.

Any person whomsoever, by arrangement with the Liberian Rubber Corporation, may collect the wild product within the Republic. They apply for and receive a licence empowering them to do this which is free of cost, and wherein an agreement is expressed to pay the prescribed royalty of 4d. per pound, and to observe one or two other clearly defined obligations ; but while, of course, during the ruling of present singularly unremunerative prices, there is but little inducement to take advantage of the freedom thus afforded, should rubber recover something of its former commercial buoyancy, it is probable that, as formerly, the collection of this valuable article will afford a sufficiently tempting prospect to attract, as it has done in the past, a considerable number of Negroes from the neighbouring British Colonies and elsewhere.

Among the indigenous rubber plants with which the forests of Liberia abound, the most valuable of all is the *Funtumia elastica*. This fine tree, which was discovered by an Englishman some few years ago, reaches a considerable height, and is a growth of great beauty as well as value. Although not by any means the only tree producer, its rubber is undoubtedly finer than that obtained from any other native source except one or two of the more important vines. Of these latter, as in other parts of Africa, the *Landolphia owariensis* yields perhaps the best, its lianas achieving great robustness—in some cases eight or ten inches in diameter. This rubber vine, by reason of its wandering propensities, opposes some difficulty in the way of rubber collection, as will be readily understood when it is explained that frequently the greater portion of its length is completely hidden in the dense, curtain-like foliage of the forest trees up which it loves to climb, leaping from tree-top to tree-top sometimes for a hundred yards or more in a position which renders it practically safe from the knife of the collector.

Chiefly, I think, from want of funds, little has as yet been done in the direction of creating a cotton industry in the Republic of Liberia. It may perhaps be supposed that the rainfall is too heavy for the successful cultivation of some of the better known producing plants; but than the higher country of the interior, with its greatly diminished wet season and intensely fertile soil, I do not think it would be possible to discover more ideally favourable localities for the establishment of cotton plantations. For their own use, the interior tribes grow a very excellent cotton, which they weave into strong, well-made cloths from six to twelve feet long, the width being about half the length. The weaving of these cloths is particularly well done, as is also the colouring obtained by the use of native dyes. The patterns selected are almost invariably blue lines, or blue and red lines alternately, and these surprisingly well executed, the dyes used being indigo and camwood. If, therefore, the wild cotton can be utilized for

the manufacture of these really beautiful and serviceable cloths, what an admirable opening there would appear to be for the production, upon a large scale, of some localized seed of American origin similar to that which has made such a reputation for itself as "Nyasa-land Long Staple." This particular seed would appear to be specially suitable for introduction into the uplands of northern Liberia, from the important circumstance that, rooted out and burned every year, the ground occupied receives an annual cleansing. If, on the other hand, such seeds as that of the Caravonica or others requiring two or three years to reach maturity were selected, the thousand insect pests whose special mission it is to thwart and destroy agriculture and husbandry would have time to breed, come to maturity, and ruin the crop.

At various points on the coast, both Peruvian and Barbados cotton may be found growing in the vicinity of the native villages, to say nothing of the wild variety already mentioned which, I believe, is called *Gossypium punctatum*; there is also the finely growing silk-cotton tree (Kapok), but nothing appears to be done with these varieties. If we turn to other parts of the West African coast, we find that some portions of our Nigerian Protectorate have been very successful in the cultivation of cotton, as also certain districts of our newly acquired possession of Togoland. In both these divisions of Africa experiments tried have been singularly and most happily successful; it is difficult to imagine, therefore, that Liberia would not be able to produce similar gratifying results.

I look to the first railway of the future to do more for the establishment of cotton plantations in Liberia than any other influence which it would be possible to bring to bear. By its means the portions of the country most favourable for planting will be rendered easily accessible, and the cotton produced upon them will find a rapid and easy means of conveyance to the hold of the waiting steamer. When this is an accomplished fact, I would suggest that the Government distribute among

the natives residing in suitable localities some approved seed, and invite them to pay their taxes, or at all events a portion of them, by means of the resultant lint. In our Protectorate of Nyasaland this has been done, I understand, with the most strikingly successful results, the people taking up the growing of cotton with enthusiasm, and greatly assisting to swell the country's annual export figures. At present the existing Liberian product, which I suppose is to some extent cultivated by the up-country tribes, is planted, picked, and woven entirely by women, who employ for the last-named operation a hand-loom of the most primitive imaginable character constructed of thin poles forming in some cases an oblong framework to which the loom is secured, and within which the operator sits using both hands and feet in the task before her. All the essential portions of the hand-loom—that is to say the wheel, spindle, and spools—are readily identifiable in this apparatus, which must have been introduced in the remote past by one or other of the nomadic interior tribes of Mohammedan affinities, or else by the Portuguese or other early European visitors. In any case, if slow, the method employed is perfectly efficient, and the resulting fabric as serviceable as it is handsome.

There are perhaps few food staples which would afford material for greater development than rice. This much-consumed necessary could be grown in quantities which, after supplying all local demands, would enable an immense surplus to be placed upon neighbouring and even upon European markets. It is so excellent, and so superior to anything of the kind which reaches the West Coast from the fields of India, Burmah, and elsewhere in the East, that once it reached home consumers, a large and steady demand would certainly result. During the past few years considerably greater attention has been devoted by natives, especially in the eastern portion of the Republic, to rice-growing ; so much so that, not long ago, the Government were considering a scheme for the purchase and establishment of rice-hulling mills in each of the four counties.

Should this be done, I think it very probable that the industry will receive a great impetus, and I regard the experiment as one well worth trying. Rice grown in Liberia is larger, finer, and much richer in amyloids than the Indian product, but not quite so white. Still, no doubt, if it were put through a hulling and cleaning mill, the colour would improve very greatly, and compare perhaps not disadvantageously with the rice now imported.

The raising of rice crops is a form of activity which must be left entirely to the natives. Personally I am unaware of any tropical food-stuff produced annually which would prove sufficiently remunerative to engage the serious attention of European exploiters. In the Zambezi Valley it was at one time, and may perhaps still be grown by one or two large concessionary companies established there, but only, I fancy, in order to enable them to maintain a food reserve for their very numerous native labourers and others. In that part of Africa the Indian seed has been introduced, and grows readily ; the amount sown, averaging a bushel to the acre, being planted in rows about a foot apart, at the beginning of the rainy season. The seed quickly germinates, transplantation to gaps occupying the latter portion of the wet weather. This, however, is not always done, it being considered by some that transplanted rice produces an inferior grain than in the case of the seeds which reach the bearing stage where they were originally planted. In favourable conditions the yield should average a ton and a half of "paddy" to the acre, the reaping being effected by the simple process of cutting off the grain heads with a knife and leaving the straw standing. The sole inducement to embark upon the plantation of rice in large quantities would probably be found in the fact that it is an industry which could be followed during the rainy season, when employment in other directions is largely at a stand-still. It is often found, in other parts of Africa, that people who would in all probability hesitate to accept other forms of labour, will readily undertake

rice cultivation, for which they appear to have some curious inborn liking.

Another staple crop which grows admirably in Liberia, but to which, properly speaking, no attention has been paid, is that of maize. The soil and rainfall are such as should produce two crops at least a year, and that without difficulty or any likelihood of failure. This is another African product whose cultivation should be left in the hands of the natives. I believe that there are few Europeans in any part of the continent who have established maize growing as the principal branch of their industry, and I consider that it could only be made remunerative to a very moderate extent by the employment of every possible form of native-labour saving machinery. It would almost seem as though maize had been introduced into Liberia in comparatively recent times, so very sparsely is it distributed, and so scarcely does it appear to form any recognized portion of the food of the people. In Monrovia, for example, a dozen or so of the easily identifiable stalks may be seen springing up in some odd corner of a vegetable garden, obviously planted for the delicate young corn-cobs which are consumed as a vegetable ; but nowhere are visible the wide fields of rustling green maize stems which make such a striking and beautiful picture in the basin of the Lujenda River, and over such immense expanses of the country to the east of Lake Nyasa. Still, I suppose, with South American maize at its present comparatively low price, there should be an excellent prospect for the much nearer raised product of Liberia, when once the grain is produced in sufficient quantities.

Another export of an importance which might be largely increased is cocoa. I do not mean the product of the coco-nut palm, so often mis-spelled "cocoa-nut," but that of a small tree which yields really not cocoa but cacao. It should finally be realized that, in spite of the retention of this form of spelling in one or two dictionaries, there is no such thing in Nature as a "cocoa-nut." Cocoa, if by that word we seek to refer



to the bean which is the basis of the preparation sometimes described as "grateful and comforting," is not obtained from a nut at all, but from a kind of pod ; whilst the coco-nut does not yield cocoa, but copra, from which we obtain an edible fat.

The small tree just mentioned, which is known to science as *Theobroma cacao*, from which the so-called cocoa is derived, is a good deal cultivated in various parts of Liberia, for the most part perhaps in the region surrounding the capital, and at Cape Palmas. The increase in the cultivation of this bean has largely coincided with the fall in the importance of coffee, and the impetus which the former has received of late years is also naturally attributable to the high prices which, for some time past, have been ruling in the markets of Europe. The tree grows well in Liberia, produces well, and appears to have no greater allowance of natural enemies than others of the country's profit producers. On other portions of the coast there are considerable plantations of cacao, and even in Liberia the cultivation of this form is attracting the attention of the natives to a very large and increasing extent.

I have seen the figures showing the profits realized upon a plantation on the Gold Coast in 1912. The area under cultivation contained about fifteen thousand trees. I cannot, of course, guarantee these particulars, but I have reason to believe them reliable. The entire crop amounted to some sixty-seven tons, which sold at an average price of 45s. per hundredweight, less, due to loss of weight, £140. The expenses, including harvesting, fermenting, transport to the coast, freight, insurance and brokerage, came to £898, leaving a net profit on the crop of £1,977, a return equivalent, I was told, to about thirty per cent. upon the amount of the capital embarked.

There are, of course, no such plantations in Liberia. The Americo-Liberians do not seem to understand how to set about the establishment of a plantation on a large scale, and naturally the native only pursues planting for the prospect it affords of making a little extra

money when he has nothing of greater interest with which to occupy his time. I do not know exactly what the former now receive for their output of cacao, but it seems that, during 1913 and 1914, European merchants at Cape Palmas fixed the price payable to natives for this article at six cents (3d.) per pound, and this for a product of which the home market value was about 50s. per hundredweight—a very satisfactory rate, I should imagine, while it lasted.

The sugar-cane grows freely, and was at one time cultivated by the Americo-Liberians to some considerable extent, but only for local consumption. Near all, or almost all, native villages, as also in Liberian vegetable gardens, small patches of sugar may be seen, and I cannot imagine any reason why, upon the many rivers on whose banks ideal soil for the growth of this indispensable grass may be noted, more has not been done to plant it systematically. The cane seen is almost identical with the Yuba variety, so extensively cultivated, and which gives such striking results on the banks of East African waterways, the ratoons reaching the same height and, approximately, the same thickness. But here, I think, the land would support heavier canes, such as that known as the Ribbon Bamboo, the Lusier, and others of a similar type. But even in the case of the Yuba, instances are not few of this cane having yielded, about twenty months after plantation, over sixty sticks of cane to the stool, the return per acre reaching occasionally somewhere about seventy tons to the acre. In this regard, I think the soil of Liberia might give a yield of cane quite as great if not greater. It is, however, possible that, due to the larger amount both of atmospheric and surface moisture, the actual saccharine percentage might not be quite so great, but of this we have no data upon which to base comparisons. At one large plantation near the Zambezi with which I am acquainted, with a yield of only forty tons of cane to the acre, the sugar recovered therefrom amounted to no less than 2.90 tons. It is fairly certain, therefore, that adopting a well-selected cane, better results than

the foregoing might reasonably be looked for in Liberia. The chief impediment to the exploitation of the sugar industry in the Negro Republic, except by the aid of foreign capital, is, of course, the very great initial expense involved in the installation of the crushing and refining machinery. I fear, therefore, that sugar manufacture on a considerable scale is likely to languish until such time as greater facilities are afforded, and a warmer welcome extended, to the employment of foreign capital than is unfortunately the case at present.

Let us now glance for a moment at one or two plants with which, so far as I am aware, experiments would promise a substantial return, but with which hitherto nothing has been done. Foremost of these is vanilla.

As we know, the most important source of supply of this valuable orchid is the group of islands in the Indian Ocean known as the Seychelles. They are about on the same parallel as Liberia, possess very much the same climate and temperature, and considerably less rainfall. The vanilla is a plant requiring exactly what Liberia has in abundance to offer it, namely, very fertile, well-drained, loamy soil. It is simply propagated by cuttings about six feet in length which strike very quickly, displaying foliage in a month or even less. As the plant develops it is trained over a pergola or other artificial support under shade, the first flowers appearing during the third year after plantation. As the flower blooms during the daylight hours of but one single day, pollination must be performed artificially as soon as they open, natives becoming sufficiently expert at this operation to fertilize with ease six hundred to seven hundred flowers in a morning. It can be assumed that one acre can support about twelve hundred plants, and such an area should produce about one hundred and sixty thousand pods yielding some hundred and forty beans to the pound. Good, well-dried beans are worth 20s. per pound in the case of selected parcels; but even taking 7s. as the average value realized throughout, it will be seen that the proposition is a most attractive one. I have much faith in the success of a properly undertaken

experiment for acclimatizing vanilla in Liberia, and the inducement to do so would seem to be increased by the important consideration that, whilst no expensive machinery or other appliance is essential, the return may be enormous.

Turning to tobacco, here is another inconceivable article of import. The Negro Republic possesses a climate and a soil which should provide every smoker and snuffer in the country, and tens of thousands out of it, with inexpensive tobacco of the very best quality, and yet the amount paid to foreign merchants for an imported quality of tobacco which could be made to grow like a weed is somewhere in the neighbourhood of £10,000 a year. There is no trouble or difficulty in planting and harvesting the tobacco leaf; the only time at which care and method are required is that of the drying, when the temperature of the flue-houses in which the leaves are placed must be carefully watched night and day, and maintained at a gradually rising temperature from 90 to 170 Fahrenheit. The planting of tobacco begins with the arrival of the rainy season. It is a hardy annual, and few of the seedlings fail to root on transplantation. But in a country possessed of such a long and continuous rainfall as Liberia, some discrimination would require to be exercised in order to ensure that the plants reached maturity simultaneously with the conclusion of the rainy months. In other portions of Africa with which I am acquainted, and in which tobacco is successfully and profitably cultivated, the greatest difficulty against which the planter has to contend is want of timber for fuel in the flue-houses. In Liberia, however, no such preoccupation need ever assail the mind of the tobacco raiser. As we have seen, the vast redundancy of the closely-packed tree-trunks is such that fuel is a perfect drug in the market, so that no objection of this kind against important schemes of tobacco culture could ever be raised.

Then there is tea. No attempt has been made, I believe, to experiment with this valuable shrub, although it might be supposed that local conditions would be

ideally favourable to its successful growth. It is a well known fact that tea requires a large and regular rainfall, together with great fertility of soil, two factors which Liberia offers at almost every point within her borders.

Among remaining products for which, could a stimulating market be found, the prospect of cultivation on a large scale would be extremely promising, there remain to be enumerated kola-nuts, camwood, ebony, ginger, ground-nuts, gum-copal, and many others of less importance. Timber is exported in very small and restricted quantities due to lack of means of transport. In a future chapter I shall have something to say regarding timber-producing trees, which are very numerous in the forests of Liberia, and only the assistance which would be afforded by a light railway is necessary to enable a profitable industry to be built up in the course of time.

Very little ivory is shipped from the coast ports. Occasionally one hears of a fine pair of tusks which have been seen passing through the hands of some local dealer, but if the weight be carefully inquired into, it will usually be found that they are comparatively small—thirty, forty, or at most fifty pounds weight each. It is stated that certain of the natives of the northern and north-western section of the country are inveterate elephant hunters, and this, of course, may be the case; but as the present writer has often had occasion ruefully to note, it is one thing to hunt elephants, but quite another to succeed in bringing one to bag, and although an unlimited amount of excitement combined with healthy exercise may be derived from the pursuit of these animals, I cannot believe that, armed as they are, the Vai or Gola or other native is likely to derive strikingly successful results from all the hunting in which he is likely to indulge. For this among other reasons the output of ivory is insignificant. It has often been stated that the bulk of this valuable substance is exported through the French Ivory Coast Colony, or finds its way to Sierra Leone, or is dis-

posed of by the agency of itinerant Mandingo traders who haunt the frontier ; but this I find it hard to believe. My own view is that the greater part of such small quantities of ivory as may reward the prowess of the native nimrods is carefully stored away in anticipation of such well-understood needs as those for the expenditure of capital on wife-purchase, slave-purchase, and so on. Certainly most of the ivory which I have seen presented unmistakable signs of having been buried, and I am of opinion that very little finds its way out of the country at all. From whatsoever cause it may spring, the impression is firmly rooted that the Liberian elephant does not carry large tasks—certainly not such as could be compared with the immense defences borne by those which roam the forests of other portions of Africa. One never hears, for example, of tusks weighing one hundred, one hundred and twenty, or one hundred and twenty-five pounds apiece, to say nothing of the mighty specimen which tipped the scale at two hundred and thirty pounds and reached Zanzibar a few years ago from the neighbourhood of Mount Kilimanjaro. This was purchased, so far as I remember, for the United States Natural History Museum, and was believed to be the largest tusk of ivory on record. I consider, therefore, that although elephants are undoubtedly very numerous in the forests of the Republic, the export of their ivory is never likely to attain to very impressive proportions.

We will now turn to the country's minerals, and consider for a time such of them as have been successfully located and described.

The geological formation of Liberia is still an uninvestigated feature. All that we are told upon the authority, so far as I am aware, of persons more or less unpossessed of special knowledge is that, for a distance of twenty miles or so from the coast, one finds dark red laterite (disintegrated gneiss), diorite, and iron-stone. This gradually gives place to metamorphic rocks, probably granite since it is intermingled with quartz crystals, to aplite, an admixture of orthoclase and

quartz, which shows itself in the boulders of the mountain ranges, and here and there to pegmatite and porphyritic felspar. I am, however, entirely unable to determine from descriptions which have reached me what the prevailing class of granite is, but have formed the opinion that, in all probability, and if the facts are as stated, it may be of similar composition to that which constitutes, as it were, the bulk of the backbone of the African continent, namely, a granitic composition belonging to one of three great groups: an igneous, a sedimentary, or a metamorphic group. This, however, is mere conjecture, and the question is likely to remain unsettled until a properly organized geological survey of the country has been carefully undertaken.

Of the value of the iron there can be no doubt. I have seen samples which seemed to me to be very like haematite, and were good examples of a metal of which the natives avail themselves for the manufacture of their swords, knives, hoes, and other implements. Mica is reported to exist in Central Liberia in very large flakes, as is also corundum, suggestive of sapphire and ruby formations. Zinc ore and copper have been brought from the neighbourhood of the Anglo-Liberian frontier, and I have seen specimens of what appeared to resemble cinnabar, the host of quicksilver.

Due, of course, to the terrible density of the bush, prospecting is a most difficult task, and with the exception of what has been accomplished by the Chartered Liberian Development Company, who have made almost superhuman efforts in this direction, little has been done to lay bare the various items of mineral wealth which the country may contain. Among the most interesting of the discoveries made by that association, mention may be made of a diamondiferous deposit situated near the St. Paul River, a small separate company being formed to work it with machinery which was specially installed for the purpose. Up to the commencement of the upheaval resulting from the outbreak of war, about one thousand diamonds were discovered, the largest stones weighing slightly over four carats, whilst,

in addition, about a kilogramme of gold was recovered. At present, due no doubt to the difficulties incidental to the times, the syndicate has suspended operations ; but there would appear to be every hope and prospect that, upon the resumption of their operations, larger diamonds may be found.

I am only aware of one gold-mining proposition at present existing in Liberia. This, although theoretically in the hands of people of the country, is understood to be supported by British capital, and the result of the prospecting undertaken two or three years ago, although no details were allowed to transpire, were such as to have encouraged very high anticipations. No authoritative information is forthcoming relative to indications of either coal deposits or mineral oil.

But with all these sources of wealth existing in the country, as undoubtedly to a greater or lesser extent they do, there is the same dark cloud overhanging their development which, unhappily, is common all Africa over, namely, the insufficiency of the native labour supply. In another part of this book it is pointed out, upon the computation of probably the most reliable authority who has as yet examined this interesting and vital matter, that the entire native population of Liberia may safely be estimated not to exceed 600,000 or 700,000. I think most persons who have had occasion to study this question will have arrived at the conclusion that this appraisalment is as near to fact as we are likely to reach for many a year to come. Of course, if all the large number of workers of acceptable sex and physique were forthcoming and available for the hard toil attendant upon commercial and agricultural development work, especially in its initial stages, Liberia would assuredly be the most favoured division of the entire African continent. But it is not so. Many of the tribes, for the present, at any rate, are deaf to the voice either of authority or suasion. They see no point whatsoever in leaving their far-distant, savage villages, where they have everything under heaven that they imagine they require, for the purpose of bearing a por-



tion in the heat of a day's work in which they are nowise interested, and so the labour supply at present goes short. This is a matter, however, which is of little actual consequence. With the advent of well-paid employment, with the needs created by the general spread of money, the native will come down to work when he discovers that his lot in life lacks many of the desirable indulgences and acquirements of those who give labour for the employer's gold. These things take time ; but although, as a whole, Africa is perhaps as badly or worse off for labour than any other portion of the earth's surface, the natives of the remoter divisions of the continent are usually not backward in the long run in taking advantage of opportunities of improving their position, and incidentally the quantity and value of their possessions, by coming down to work when they see the advantages which they derive from doing so. It is usually later, when the undertakings for which they are so indispensable increase and multiply in number, that the pinch is felt.

At present, although labour at times seems to fall somewhat short of requirements, but little of the straits so lamentably felt elsewhere can be said to have asserted their ill-omened presence. Still, labour is not cheap. The usual rate paid upon plantations for unskilled labour is 1s. per day, with an addition of 3d. for food. Engagements of gangs are made as a rule for six months, beyond which period it is difficult—often impossible—to induce the men to remain. When, therefore, it is borne in mind that only towards the latter portion of their term of service do the labourers begin to understand or display any aptitude for the somewhat specialized work they are often called upon to perform, it will be seen that the efficient discharge of their duties can only be looked for during the latter portion of their period of engagement. On the arrival of a new gang, everything connected with their instruction must be begun *de novo*. There is, however, comfort for the cultivator in the reflection that, if the reservoir could be tapped, the natives are there ; and such undertakings as

are already on foot, and have felt the hardships entailed by labour shortages, may at any rate look forward to a time when means may at length be devised to utilize this, at present, useless redundancy.

Sufficient cattle-raising in Liberia is pursued to demonstrate clearly that oxen, sheep, and goats undoubtedly do well there, although they are not likely to attain at present to large and numerous herds. In the Mandingo uplands, beyond the great forest, large numbers of cattle and horses are reared, which find their way down occasionally to the markets of Sierra Leone. On the St. Paul River, Liberian farmers have succeeded in successfully acclimatizing these oxen, which are of an excellent type, if somewhat small. Some there are which are utilized for traction purposes, ox-carts drawn by them being not infrequently met with on the short expanses of road available for their use. Something, therefore, could no doubt be done, if the attempt were made, to breed and fatten these animals for daily consumption.

The Liberian sheep is a smooth-coated variety, whilst the goat possesses but one peculiarity, which it shares with the Kruman, namely, the almost ludicrous shortness of his legs. Sheep and goats may be seen in considerable numbers in the streets and gardens of the settlements, but rarely, in my unhappy experience, make their appearance upon the more satisfactory and commoner ground of a good-sized meat-dish.

## CHAPTER VI

### LIBERIA AS A CONSUMER—TRADE—COMMERCE

LIBERIA is still a moderately good customer of the United Kingdom, if not quite so good as in former years. It is not so very long since our share of Liberian trade generally predominated; but whilst the portion of the import movement which fell to our manufacturers in 1908 amounted to £74,000, it had only increased to £75,000 in 1912. For that year, the total value of imports was close on £239,000, so, as will be seen, our trade as a whole only participated in it to the limited extent of about 31 per cent. German goods, on the other hand, enormously exceeded ours in values and quantities received, and continued to do so up to the outbreak of war. Their recent expulsion from the Liberian Republic should afford our commerce an opportunity of regaining its former importance, of which it may be hoped that full advantage will be taken.

The details of imports include articles of ordinary use and consumption, and a few somewhat extraordinary ones, which it would be natural to suppose that the rich soil and moist climate of the country would enable the farming population to produce in quantities, leaving a considerable margin for export after local needs had been provided for. Foremost among these is rice, a staple to which I have referred at some length in the preceding chapter. Rice is consumed by nearly everybody in the Republic; Americo-Liberians and natives alike—especially coast natives—requiring it daily. On an average, perhaps about 1,000 tons of rice may be

imported yearly, making, with the large and increasing quantities raised locally, a very considerable annual consumption. It seems, aided by several other vegetable products of the country, to take the place of bread, a necessity only regarded as such by the Europeans and the well-to-do classes. Not that bread is particularly expensive (nor is it particularly good); it certainly costs about 50 per cent. more than it does in England in peace time—but then, somehow, abroad one seems to expect that it should.

Salt is another article which, imported in quantities approximating to 2,000 tons a year might—for the most part at any rate—be produced in the country. In the interior, salt-sticks, that is to say, parcels of salt about as thick as a man's forearm and about three feet long, have for generations been regarded as a convenient form of currency, fixed prices stated in sticks of salt being set against most purchasable articles from cattle to wives, and from slaves to firearms. In other portions of the continent, large salt-pans are profitably worked, and the product, if not quite white enough to coincide with European ideas, is yet an important and profitable industry, much used as a means of barter for various forms of native produce.

But if wonder be felt at the neglect by the natives of these two important sources of comparative wealth, what shall be said for the want of initiative on the part of the Krus, Grebos, and other coast tribes, who, with a sea at their door teeming with almost every description of excellent fish, purchase, nevertheless, stock-fish from Norway which could be entirely dispensed with if more attention were paid to fishing, and to the drying in the hot sunshine of the West African Coast of the redundant portions of the daily catches. As it is, these people have but little idea of taking fish by means other than the ancient and primitive hand-line. In this respect they are far behind the natives of the East Coast, some of whose nets, made by themselves entirely, would almost rival in size and workmanship those employed by European fishermen.

For several years past, the value of Manchester goods and textiles of all kinds has fluctuated but little from a proportion of about one-tenth of the entire volume of the imports. Some of these and of their uses I think I can best illustrate by taking my reader in spirit for a short promenade through one of the native quarters. As you walk along through the streets, especially whilst elbowing your way through the picturesque crowds which form the population of what is known at Monrovia as "Waterside," with its narrow streets littered with piassava fibre, and its quaint turnings encumbered with the "pitches" of itinerant vendors of very nasty-looking dainties—a steep ascent on the one hand, and a number of unimagined shops and stores, built close to the edge of the Mesurado Lagoon; on the other, your eye is caught continually by the immense number of African costumes, all harmonious, all appropriate to the scene and the wearers, and all made in Manchester.

First you will see a throng of Krumen in blue calico trousers, all "bosom" and no legs, so to speak, the upper part of their bodies concealed beneath white flannel singlets, or rather singlets which once were white. Over the latter are worn European waistcoats, old jackets, ruinously ragged and disgustingly dirty, or anything in fact that will suffice to cover their nakedness. They pass you jauntily by, their short, sturdy legs and quick walk contrasting with the gait of a group of Mandingos who saunter along with more stately tread, and the air of having the entire world at their feet. Here the religion of Islam is at once apparent in the quiet dignity and comparative cleanliness of their appearance. Over a long, flowing shirt, fashioned of Lancashire sheeting, and made into a garment strongly resembling the nightgown-like *kanzu* of Zanzibar, they wear *kaftans* or long robes of various colours, often of black cloth strongly redolent of the looms of Bradford. These not ungraceful garments are often skilfully embroidered upon the breast and throat, which are open, as also about the hem of

the voluminous sleeves. At times they may carrying straight-bladed, native-made swords wrought leather scabbards, and their costume completed by a close-fitting skull-cap or fez, a kind of footwear—not infrequently cheap, A brown boots. Others again wear striped *ka*, native cotton, exceedingly well woven, and most, if not all, carry cheap black umbrellas, for which the local sale must be considerable.

The clothing of the women is extremely picturesque, on the whole. They may most usually be seen in an ample body-cloth of blue calico, striped inch-wide with white. The shoulders and upper portion of the body are frequently draped with a flowing mantle of dark coloured material, usually a sombre shade of blue, the head-covering being a close, turban-like cap fitting well down over the ears. Bead necklets of subdued colours, and one or two twisted bracelets of silver, with ear-rings of the same metal, complete a costume not unpossessed of a considerable measure of grace and dignity. Proceeding on our way, a band of Vai people draw politely aside to allow us to pass. They are "Manchester" from head to foot. Handkerchiefs of red or blue cotton, relieved by white spots or diamonds, and occasionally ornamented with small silver brooches, are tied loosely round the heads of the women, whose shoulders are covered, somewhat in the fashion of the Mandingos, with rather sombre fabrics of cotton, but displaying usually a harmless design chiefly in white. The lower body-cloth is seen to be very voluminous, and is secured round the waist by its own folds, in which, tied in knots, are carried small sums of money, and other portable articles such as keys and the like. The men are seen to be wearing a curious shirt of white cloth, much shorter than those favoured by Mohammedans in other parts of Africa. The neck and bosom are tastefully embroidered in a fashion which somewhat recalls the ornamentation on the *kaftans* of the Mandingos, and is secured by a curiously-shaped silver stud. The singularly loose

pantaloons worn by the Vai men, like those seen on the previously encountered Krus, are of coloured calico, a small, white cap completing the dress.

With a rush and a yell, brimming over with merriment, a number of young Kru-girls from the adjacent native quarter run swiftly past to some festivity in their gala costume, wearing as much blue and white, or brown and white, striped calico as they can comfortably wind round them. We see that their ears and hair are ornamented with tastefully-fashioned gold pins and ear-rings. Their enormous necklaces of beads are of the most extravagant size, encircling their necks in thick bands twenty or thirty times, silver-mounted rams' horns, suspended from the shoulders, being carried under the arms. Wrists and fingers are hideously laden with enormous, massive bangles and rings of copper, silver, or both. Over all an air of perfect contentment and entire self-satisfaction, such as you have seen in the faces of numbers of ladies of your acquaintance as, perfectly turned out, and perfectly aware of it, they sweep forward to greet the hostess at some pleasant home function.

But here on the Waterside at Monrovia, all these variously but usually appropriately garbed natives are gathered together. There you may see dear, fat old Sierra Leone "Mammies" who greet you, should they know you, pipe in mouth, with wild parrot-shrieks which make the welkin ring. They are, it is true, somewhat unbecomingly garbed in voluminous bodices, and very full, bunchy skirts dimly reminiscent of the illustrations one has seen in the back numbers of *Punch* which issued about fifty years ago. What they lack in grace of outline, however, they gain in colour, which is as brilliant as African colour always should be. They always appear to be of what is sometimes called the "comfortable" age. I never remember to have seen a young Sierra Leone woman; perhaps they do not come to Liberia, but such as one finds, they all seem, and I firmly believe are, whole-heartedly glad to see one. They love to pour out all their household woes

into your sympathetic ear, and if they can manage to squeeze a small "dash" out of you at the same time, their joy and gratification are unbounded.

On the Waterside you will see Golas, Des, Gbalins, and many other representatives of the up-country tribes, moving about in a kaleidoscope of bright colour, all Manchester woven, and in a babel of shrill tongues, such as may be found in probably few other places.

Dealing with other kinds of imports, from time out of mind Liberia's needs have been confined to such articles as those mentioned, together with such things as tobacco, hardware, guns and gunpowder, and a number of others, from the list of which trade gin and kerosene must on no account be omitted. But the item of hardware demonstrates once again the astonishing conservatism of the African, for whose use the great bulk of the various articles are primarily destined. I am assured that the same pattern and description of goods are demanded to-day as those which came into the country in the very earliest periods of the old-established coast-traders' commercial experiences, and not only that, but in no circumstances, though he possessed the eloquence of a successful pleader, could a salesman induce the native to take anything else of a similar character, although the superiority of the object proffered might be perfectly obvious to anybody else. Their cutlass-matchets are the same to-day as they were, in all probability, at the time of the earliest Portuguese incursions. These formidable weapons have a terrible blade of no mean weight and over three feet long. There is little doubt in my mind that, for centuries past, they have been esteemed for their utility in far less peaceful pursuits than those in which, near the coast at any rate, they are for the most part employed to-day. Matchets are used nowadays for cutting down and clearing bush, forest, and undergrowth. They fulfil, at one and the same time, the functions and purposes of an axe, a sickle, and a scythe. I never see one without being struck by the reflection of how neatly and cleanly one straight-armed



cut would lop off a head or shear a limb; and I shrewdly suspect that their handiness in war as well as in peaceful husbandry may easily account for their prolonged favour in the estimation of the West African.

In Liberia practically all natives smoke, both men and women. They think but little of the huge, voluminous cigar, constructed with such pains out of a piece of banana leaf, which on the East Coast is so much in favour, and when not in use, although partly consumed, is carried with dignity behind the smoker's ear. Here you will see constantly the entire family, papa, mamma, and the girls, each pulling away with right goodwill, and discharging volumes of smoke from a hideous European clay pipe of most repulsively capacious bowl. As time wears on, this pipe wears with it, until, as old age approaches, and with but an inch of stem remaining, it becomes a veritable *brûle-gueule*, sticking forbiddingly out of the corner of the owner's mouth, for all the world like some terrible disfiguring growth or excrescence. In the interior, tobacco, like salt, is quite a medium of recognized barter, and, in certain well-understood quantities, has come to be regarded almost as a currency, cattle, wives, and other articles having their fixed prices specified in copper kettles, kegs of gunpowder, "sticks" of salt, and tobacco. Whether, in the event of local production attaining to large proportions in the years to come, the expenses incidental to matrimonial undertakings are destined likewise to increase is, of course, a very serious question, and one which, some day, may greatly exercise native economists in the far interior.

The import of arms and ammunition has been very wisely taken in hand exclusively by the Government of the Republic. There can be no doubt that, for many years past, traffic in and smuggling of arms and ammunition of all sorts had become a very serious problem, and was productive and provocative of very much of the constant native unrest which, at such frequent intervals, has from time to time convulsed large areas of the less pacified portions of the country. It has been stated

that, in so far as the Kru coast is concerned, the large quantities of arms of precision in the hands of these people have been either smuggled in over the inland frontiers, or purchased in Europe when Krumen, employed on board of German vessels, have visited Hamburg and other continental ports. Be this as it may, there can be no doubt that the Krus, Bassas, Grebos, and allied tribes are, at the present time, fairly well armed, and if their knowledge of the principles of musketry were greater, they would be formidable enemies with whom to reckon. As it is, however, they are said to be surprisingly bad shots, and I think all who have the welfare of the country at heart will echo a pious hope that they may long remain so.

The Liberian aborigines, or such as may have come into frequent contact with Europeans or Americo-Liberians or both, form immediately an abiding and consuming passion for the possession of European clothing and boots. For its unsuitability, or for the unspeakable discomfort which, to the lightly clad untrammelled African, must result from its adoption, they care not at all. Happy is the Kru or Bassa who is the undisputed possessor of a complete suit of hideous, frowsy, ready-made, fit-where-it-touches, cheap, Liverpool clothes. I had at one time a young Bassa boy in my employ, earning the respectable stipend—far above the value of his services, be it said—of £2 per month. After he had been with me about a year or so, he hearkened to the voice of the tempter, and fell. He deposited with the local agent of some Liverpool house which ought to be heartily ashamed of doing such disreputable, catch-penny business, all his funded savings, and boldly ordered out four suits of clothes, whose prices smacked loudly of sweating in its worst and most sordid form. In due time the goods came, the documents relating to them going as usual to the bank for the collection of the outstanding balance. One morning the horror-stricken Bassa boy came to me in a pitiable condition of disenchantment and dismay. The balance owing to the slop-tailor in Liverpool,

swollen by a dreadful total of charges for postage and customs, was far beyond his means, and he saw nothing for it, at the moment when his longing fingers were eagerly getting ready to tear open the parcels, but to cut the loss of his deposit, and let the coveted English clothing go back whence it came. Of course, in the end I made him an advance and sent him away happy, but I would not, in such a climate as this, condemn even the person "who calleth his brother a fool" to the fate of wearing such garments as were soon afterwards proudly, rapturously displayed before me. Oh, the thickness and frowst of those terrible, shoddy, already dingy-looking Liverpool "reach-me-downs," it made me perspire merely to look at them! But second-hand clothing in Liberia should prove a profitable "line," as the commercial travellers say. One thing to which your otherwise but partially clothed Kruman or "bush-nigger" yields reverent admiration is somebody else's discarded top-hat or bowler. You may often see quaint figures perambulating the streets clad in native body clothing or a coloured *kaftan*, but grotesquely crowned by a poor, old, battered, worn-out "topper," the wearer's gait attuned to the misbegotten dignity of his mirth-provoking, pantomime-suggesting appearance. Nobody laughs. An intimate friend may perhaps draw nigh and with some hesitation ask him, in the words of a half-forgotten song, where he got it, or the price paid, or other interesting particulars. The owner, if the inquirer be a person of weight and confidence, may perhaps surrender it for a moment for inspection, with that half-careless, half-jealous, all pervading air of ownership with which the just-left-school youngster places his first brand-new 16 bore Holland and Holland in the hands of an envying, admiring friend. The momentary examination over, the proprietor recovers his property, replaces it gravely upon his head, and walks away trying the while to look as though he had never worn anything else.

I am afraid the European stores established at Monrovia may be regarded as institutions which provide

at present but little in the way of general articles of daily use. For instance, it is far easier, and a much smaller tax upon one's inventiveness, to ask for something that is not vended rather than for something that is. These stores are, for the most part, of dreary corrugated iron, and consist of a large, oblong apartment, with a small office at one end. Against the walls, and at times in the middle of the centre space which is, however, cut off from the buyer by a counter, large piles of size-smelling cotton textiles are placed piece upon piece, alternating with similar erections composed of cheap coloured blankets. Against the walls, shelf-like recesses are contrived, the resting-places of unattractive articles of glass and delf and doubtful china. Boots and shoes in cardboard boxes for the dry season hide their cheap unalluring forms from the towering superciliousness of the serried ranks of high gumboots, indispensable for the period of the rains, whilst evening pumps may be seen drawing back in manifest distaste from the plebeian proximity of open boxes of odorous onions which repose unconcernedly upon the floor beneath. Not an inch of space is wasted; the goods which, by some strange fatality, appear invariably to consist of articles which one has not only never wanted, but which in no conceivable combination of circumstances one ever could stand in need of, are ranged apparently without much regard to class or category. In some far-off corner, you may at length light upon a miscellaneous assortment of patent medicines, perfumes, tins of sweet American cigarettes, a few bottles of whisky and other alcoholic liquids—in fact what might, with some slight imaginative effort, be described as the perfumery and fancy-goods department. But the stock of these articles is never either large or varied, and presents an aspect at once neglected and somewhat fly-blown. Whilst there is probably nothing very surprising in this, the stranger possessed of powers of observation sees room for astonishment that more effort is not directed towards stocking articles of more attractive exterior and wider

ranges of usefulness. Turn we to the ceiling. From numberless hooks driven into the rough wood of the naked beams, festoons of buckets and kettles and cheap paraffin lamps hang drearily downward. A disconsolate-looking frying-pan dangles cheek by jowl with a canvas-covered ham, and seems to be waiting for the fire to be lighted which shall bring the two into still closer communion. Yards of dingy lamp-wick, much discoloured by the flight of time, are suspended from the handle of a pendant iron foot-bath, and have afforded an admirable site within its coils for an enterprising spider whose successful efforts are attested by countless gossamer wings which flutter backward and forward in the warm afternoon air. In a word, the stock and its somewhat cheerless setting are obviously cheap, the goods manifestly manufactured for the market, which there seems to have been no attempt to improve, and in no respect either so good or so well-chosen as would be those in other parts of Africa comprehended in that often-heard, inclusive phrase "kaffir-truck."

Such are some of the older established stores; but I fancy indications of a new order of methods may at times be discerned in one or two whose management is beginning to grasp the possibilities of the future. The foregoing description must not be taken as applying to all the business undertakings established at Monrovia, although it affords a moderately accurate idea of most of them. The numbers of Europeans, and probably of European ladies also, is likely, I should think, very materially to increase after the war, when, I have no doubt, their numerous needs will give rise to very considerable changes for the better in the buying for stores which is conducted by their head offices in England. At present scarcely any articles for household use are sold, and whilst it is to be feared that the manner of life formerly led by foreigners was one which did not render indispensable such articles as towels and dusters, even these will, I doubt not, at length make their appearance, as the need for their employment grows better and more clearly understood.

Taken as a whole, commodities of all kinds are by no means prohibitively dear. If a glance be cast over the customs tariff which I have appended to this chapter, it will be found that it compares very favourably with those of other divisions of Africa, especially with the French and Portuguese Spheres of Influence, where taxation, especially of articles of foreign manufacture, reaches a point whereat they are practically beyond the reach of all save the well-to-do.

Building material imported into the country confines itself to corrugated iron, cement, guttering, timber, and glass door and window-frames. In an early chapter of this book, I gave some description of the appearance of the Liberian houses which, up to the present, have been regarded as sufficiently supplying the needs of the people in regard to shelter. There was a somewhat earlier type of dwelling, built upon the same architectural design, but constructed entirely of flakes of wood called "shingles." These, in the smaller, remoter districts, are still to be seen, and if not very beautiful to look upon, are not devoid of a certain element of rather rude, rough-and-ready picturesqueness. The entire structure, roof and outer walls, was constructed of the same primitive material, each slab of wood, of native growth, being two or three feet square. These were, in time, replaced by the brick houses of the present day, with their corrugated iron roofs; but it has always seemed to me that, when one comes to consider the excessive wetness of the climate, the bricks employed were either insufficiently baked, or else made of inferior clay. Due to one or other cause, after a few years of exposure to the weather, they betray a strong and most embarrassing tendency to crumble. Possibly this may have given rise to the fact that the new houses, and those now in course of construction, are built mainly of cement blocks, and this material, I think, is likely in the future almost entirely to replace bricks as a material for house-building in the more considerable towns.

But, in addition to changing their building material,

Liberian builders of to-day have advanced very considerably in their ideas regarding the form, and, above all, the spaciousness of the houses of the present and future. None of the old buildings, with the exception perhaps of the Executive Mansion, fulfil entirely the modern conception of airiness or hygiene. The new dwellings, however, are much better, and mark a distinct improvement in these important respects. They are largely built upon the two-storied bungalow principle, and instead of possessing only one small verandah, or "piazza" as it is called, built over the front entrance, are designed with good wide galleries running round three and sometimes four sides. These verandahs are supported by cement columns, and present a very graceful appearance; the fact, however, that they are in no way reinforced would be one upon which, did I occupy such a building, I should look with no little apprehension. Hitherto, the great width of verandah, in the cases of the few houses of more or less modern design to which I am referring, has had a tendency to darken the rooms within, but this is a fault which no doubt experience and observation will eventually correct. From the foregoing it is evident that, as the older houses of Monrovia and other centres crumble and cease to be occupied, and others are built to take their places, a considerable demand for building material of the classes mentioned is certain to arise.

With the growth of agricultural pursuits, which of late has shown signs of a limited reawakening, attention has been directed to labour-saving machinery. In this way, such things as disk-ploughs, harrows, and many other contrivances of a similar character have been carefully looked up, and resources examined to see how far investment in them is practicable by the farming class. Of course, the United States has greatly specialized in most of the types of agricultural machinery suitable for advantageous employment in Liberia; in fact, rightly or wrongly, is looked upon as the only country from which they can be obtained. I find this

view a somewhat extraordinary one. It seems to me that, with the return of peace on earth, the time will also have come for our manufacturers once and for all to remove that impression, by doing something more than merely continuing to furnish such markets as may chance to offer themselves, as I fear was too much the tendency before war galvanized them into new and unsought prodigies in undreamed-of directions. With the return of peace the time will surely have come for them to find out what the world (not necessarily the world of Liberia alone) is using, and to make some effort to manufacture and supply some of it. Why, one asks in vain, should it be necessary for Liberia—to use some small illustration—to send to the United States for agricultural requirements if British manufacturers can supply them so much more expeditiously? The answer to this is that, before the war, we appeared to be disinclined to produce machinery (and many other things) which was just a little different to what had been offered by our forefathers; and in this disinclination lay the opportunity which our trade rivals seized upon to out-distance us, I hope not permanently, in the race for big production. Conservatism in politics may, according to many, be the road which leads to the lunatic asylum, but conservatism in trade and commerce is assuredly a straight road to Carey Street and commercial perdition. “Take it or leave it” may have been a very impressive phrase in those bygone days when the commerce of Britain was supreme in the markets of the world; unhappily it is supreme there no longer, and the most important of the many reasons which might be cited for this *dégringolage* would appear to consist in conspicuous want of enterprise. Let none think that in these lines I am using the language of exaggeration; it is those who live abroad who see these things a thousand-fold more clearly than those who spend their time in British offices, wondering why the markets are losing their buoyancy, and facts are stubborn things. Now let me come to an end of this homily, and endeavour to show, for the benefit of



whomsoever it may concern, what the European and the Liberian live on.

The natural resources of the country are immense, almost inexhaustible; but in spite of this fact, the food supply derived from them is insufficient, inadequate, and poor. Nearly all the articles of daily consumption required by Europeans (if one except that tasteless, undesired apology; that stringy, tooth-destroying, fraudulent bird the grossly miscalled fowl) are imported from elsewhere. A former American representative, who must have been something of a humorist in his way, was once heard to say that whilst he resided in Liberia, he boarded in Europe, and this may be regarded as a statement containing quite as much fact as fiction. The Liberian is not a teetotaler, neither is he a vegetarian; but I regard him, on the whole, as a man of moderate habits, seldom erring on the side of excess. In the family these people are not, I understand, great consumers of animal food, first of all because it is difficult to procure and rather costly, and, secondly, because vegetable diets are generally found more suitable. In this way they use a large quantity of imported rice, and of locally grown manioc (cassava), which for some curious reason has come to be called "cassada." These are eaten with palm oil, stock-fish, imported red-herrings, and other relishes of a similar kind. Of course, the more prosperous do eat meat in considerable quantities which, like the Europeans, they order in advance from the periodical steamers; they also consume the dreadful fowls bred by the natives, and many other things. I suppose, however, that the great mass of the Liberian people largely subsist, as stated, on vegetable products, cooked with fish if it be procurable, or, if not, with a variety of spinach-like leaves which they find in the forest in great plenty.

For Europeans it must be confessed that the conditions of life are far from easy. In Monrovia—and I believe the same statement is true when applied to other centres—there is no regular supply of animal food, no butchery, and, until recently, whatever there

may be there now, no cold storage. Ice is procurable at times in small quantities, but the existing output is only sufficient for table purposes, and the supply is irregular. However, fruit, meat, and many other necessities may be ordered from the periodical British steamers, or such of them as are fitted with refrigerating plant. It will be observed that I have limited myself to the statement that these things may be ordered, but between the order and the actual delivery, for a variety of troublesome reasons, there is a great, sometimes an unbridgeable, gulf fixed. These vessels arrive irregularly, and it is, of course, impossible to keep ice in such a climate for longer than four or five days; thus the use of fresh provisions is ordinarily limited to about eight days in the course of each month. The question, therefore, naturally presents itself, what do Europeans do to keep body and soul together during the remaining twenty-two days wherein nothing reaches them from external sources? The answer is tinned provisions and fowls. I fancy it was the great explorer Stanley who used to say that he could detect no difference between the taste of a tin of beef and that of a tinned plum-pudding; and although there is no doubt that, since his day, preserved provisions have greatly improved both in quality and variety, there is one particular in which they fall woefully short of the fresh article, and that is the important one of nutrition. A person who rises from a dinner of preserved provisions feels full but grievously unsatisfied. He has within him a yearning for he knows not what, but which, if it were capable of analysis, would, I feel confident, resolve itself into an indignant rebellion on the part of his inner man at a régime about as nutritive as sawdust, and as tasteless as paper. The African fowl is of small utility in assisting to tide over the intervals between steamers. Persons living at home who from time to time pass a poulterer's shop, and see there displayed the fine productions of the British barn-yard, and base their conception of the meaning of the word fowl thereon, will doubtless be wondering for

what reason so liberal a diet as that of fowls awakens within me so small a measure of enthusiasm. Let them learn then that, in comparison with the noble English rooster, the African bird is as a bantam to a brahma, and, as regards flavour and nutrition, as water unto wine. Your African fowl, if he be of fine and generous proportions (of course, I do not speak of the lesser, the weaklier fry), may perhaps turn the scale at seven or eight ounces; but if he should have come through hard times—and most of them seem indeed to have done so—five or six ounces is all that he can reasonably be expected to weigh. He lies before you on the dish, a poor, melancholy corpse, with sharpened joints and prominent breastbone, which seem on the point of breaking through the tasteless stringiness which so thinly veils them from view. Small wonder let there be then that between such fowls as these and tinned provisions there should be so little to choose. I have talked to nice, healthy-looking people fresh out from home on this and kindred matters, and have sometimes surprised a glance of covert amusement as I heard the careless statement that they cared very little what they ate, that anything would do, and so on. But after a month or two or three, I have seen these same individuals again, the same, but with a difference; a little drawn about the corners of the mouth; colour replaced by an unhealthy pallor; a great deal less energetic; in a condition, in a word, which no other part of Africa known to me would have produced in so short a time. What is it due to? The answer is simple: an enervating climate, whose effect upon the human system is heightened and hastened by unsuitable food, not wanting in quantity, but mercilessly starving by reason of its almost complete absence of sustaining qualities. I suppose even to those residing in a perfectly healthy climate, the sudden withdrawal of so important an article of daily use as fresh animal food would prove an unwelcome if not a serious deprivation. The result, on the exhausting, burning coast of West Africa can, therefore, be very readily imagined.

What is really required is a fuller realization by the heads of the various business houses engaged in the country that there is neither economy nor efficiency in present conditions as affecting their employés. Taking the personnel of the mercantile establishments as at present circumstanced, it is a rare occurrence to find the entire staff at work. Somebody is usually ill, and breakdowns necessitating expensive voyages to Europe for the recruitment of health are matters of all too frequent occurrence. Why not put an end to so unsatisfactory a state of things, which I attribute entirely, or almost entirely, to the causes I have described? I feel convinced that, if proper steps were taken, sickness would be much less usual than it is at present; whilst if, in addition, effect were given to the recommendations of the various schools of tropical medicine, and proper attention paid to mosquito-proofing of offices and residential quarters, there would be but little occupation for doctors, for the Liberian coast—Monrovia, at any rate—would become comparatively healthy.

I wish it were possible to give my readers a dim idea of the extraordinary situations which arise from the existing haphazard arrangements, more especially from those connected with the provision and periodical distribution of supplies from the steamers. These, at times, produce most awkward dilemmas, which I can best illustrate perhaps in the form of the following brief sketch which has been drawn from life.

#### THE DINNER PARTY.

##### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ :

*The Master of the House.*

*His Wife.*

*The Cook.*

*Divers Voices on the Telephone.*

##### SCENE I.

*The Interior of Any House in Monrovia you like to mention.*

HIS WIFE. What a time it is, Charles, since we had the Simpsons to dinner. I really think we ought to ask them again soon, don't you?

MASTER OF HOUSE. When shall we have any meat?

H. W. Let me see, there is a boat due on Monday; shall I ask them then?

M. OF H. Yes, do, and get one or two men from the Bank as well, and we'll try to get up a rubber of bridge afterwards.

H. W. Very well, I'll write the notes this morning.

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.

*The same as before. Time: Monday week, afternoon.*

*(Enter M. OF H. from his Office.)*

M. OF H. *(cheerfully)*. Well, little woman, how are things going?

H. W. I am beginning to feel a little anxious about to-night, dear. Have you heard what time the meat and things will be landed from the steamer?

M. OF H. No. She's not in yet, and nobody seems to know when she will be either.

H. W. Oh, Charles, what shall we do if she doesn't come in time?

*(Enter COOK.)*

M. OF H. Hanged if I —

COOK. Missus, what 'bout meat? Meat he no come one time no dinner.

*(H. W. turns a shade paler. Telephone bell rings violently.)*

MRS. SIMPSON. Good afternoon. We are in such a hole. Mr. Garden and Mr. Winter, two friends of ours, have just turned up from Bassa. Do you think we might bring them with us to-night? We have literally nothing to eat in the house.

H. W. *(after repeating the fell message and gazing blankly at her husband)*. What on earth shall we do?

M. OF H. *(stonily)*. Good Lord!

H. W. *(to Cook, while telephone goes on ringing without intermission)*. Have we got any fish?

COOK. No fis' in market. I done get one fowel, small-small. I pay—

M. OF H. *(impatiently)*. Oh, never mind what you paid.

H. W. Only one thing for it; we must put them all off. *(Picks up receiver.)* Are you there? I am so dreadfully sorry, Mrs. Simpson, but something has happened to the steamer, and our provisions have not turned up. We are completely stranded without them. Would it be the same if we made it to-morrow night instead?

MRS. SIMPSON. Oh, how terrible! We counted so much on coming to you that we have laid nothing in for to-night. If you could only have let us know earlier—

H. W. Well, you see, we have only just heard and—are you there? (*No response*). She has cut off. Cat!

(*Telephone rings again.*)

STEAMER AGENT. Are you there? Sorry, but we have just received a cable to say our steamer is delayed, and will not be in before to-morrow night.

M. or H. Oh, d—n!

H. W. (*struggling with half-suppressed sob*). Re-re-ally, Charles!

The dramatis personæ are seen in a dejected attitude whilst the Cook, in the background, gathers up a square of Lazenby's soup, a tin of soused herrings, and a tin of Libbey's preserved beef, as the scene closes in.

Let not the careless reader of the foregoing tragic sketch taken from real life imagine that it is in any sense exaggerated or overdrawn. Such trying episodes are of no infrequent occurrence, and the moral is that if there should be any well-meaning person or association, at home or elsewhere, who, with the prospect of a certain meed of gain, might be able to devise measures calculated in their application to improve conditions which can render such incidents as that above described possible, I feel sure that all and sundry in Monrovia would welcome them with hand and heart and—æsuphagus (so to speak).

## CUSTOMS TARIFF, 1910

### SECTION A.—IMPORTS

Article.	Rate of Duty.
	\$
Aerated and Mineral Waters (reputed quart bottle) ..	0·02
" " " " (reputed pint bottle) ..	0·01
Ale, Beer, and Stout (reputed quart bottle) ..	0·06
" " " (reputed pint bottle) ..	0·03
" " " (per gallon in bulk) ..	0·36
Arms and Munitions—	
Breech-loading, single, or double-barrelled guns or rifles (each) .. .. .	4·80
Percussion cap guns and rifles (each) .. .. .	2·50
Flint-lock guns and pistols and dane guns (each) ..	0·60
Guns not specified (each) .. .. .	2·50
Revolvers and pistols other than flint-lock pistols (each)	1·20
Percussion caps (per thousand) .. .. .	0·60

Article.	Rate of Duty. §
Lead in any form (per pound) .. .. .	0·02
Swords and bayonets (each) .. .. .	0·50
Cartridges, filled, for rifles or guns (per hundred) ..	0·40
Cartridges, filled, for revolvers and pistols (per hundred)	0·25
Cartridges, unfilled (per hundred) .. .. .	0·12
Gunpowder (per pound) .. .. .	0·08
Bacon (per pound) .. .. .	0·01
Basins, 12 inches and under in diameter (per dozen) ..	0·12
„ over 12 inches in diameter (per dozen)	0·25
Beef (per 200 lb.) .. .. .	1·25
Beef Tongues (per 200 lb.) .. .. .	1·25
Biscuits, other than Cabin, Pilot or Ship's bread (per pound)	0·04
Brass Kettles (weight of handle included, whether of brass or other metal) (per pound) .. .. .	0·05
Butter (per pound) .. .. .	0·06
Candy, Confectionery and Sweetmeats of every description (per pound)	0·10
Candles (per pound) .. .. .	0·04
Cement (per 400 lb.) .. .. .	0·20
Cutlasses, Matchets, and Billhooks (per dozen) ..	0·30
Demijohns, empty (each) .. .. .	1·00
Fish, Dry (per pound) .. .. .	0·01
„ Pickled (per 200 lb.) .. .. .	1·00
Ham (per pound) .. .. .	0·02
Iron Pots, Ovens, and Spiders (per pound) ..	0·02
Kerosene (per case) .. .. .	0·30
Kru Boxes, all sizes, manufactured abroad (each) ..	0·50
Lard (per pound) .. .. .	0·02
Lime (per 100 lb.) .. .. .	0·05
Lumber, Scantlings for sale (per cubic foot) ..	0·01
„ All boards, for sale (per super square foot)	0·00½
Margarine (per pound) .. .. .	0·10
Pig's Feet and Head (per 200 lb.) .. .. .	1·25
Plates, earthenware, not in dinner, tea, coffee, or other table service (each) .. .. .	0·01
Pork (per 200 lb.) .. .. .	1·25
Rice (per cwt.) .. .. .	0·25
Salt (per cwt.) .. .. .	0·08
Sausages, pickled (per pound) .. .. .	0·04
„ dried, in skins or cans (per pound) ..	0·05
Soap, Common (per pound) .. .. .	0·01
„ Perfumed or toilet (per pound) .. .. .	0·06
Spirits—Whisky, Brandy, Old Tom Gin, and Rum other than ordinary trade Rum (per gallon) .. .. .	2·00
Upon other spirits and strong waters, the strength of which can be ascertained by Tralles' hydrometer, such	

Article.	Rate of Duty. \$
as common trade Rum and Gin, when under the strength of 50 per cent. of pure alcohol (per gallon) ..	1·20
And an additional duty of 25 cents per each degree or fraction of a degree above 50 per cent.	
Upon spirits so sweetened or obscured that the degree of strength cannot be ascertained by Tralles hydrometer, such as Liqueurs and Bitters (per gallon) ..	2·00
Starch (per pound) .. .. .	0·06
Steel or Iron Bars (per pound) .. .. .	0·02
Sugar, white (per pound) .. .. .	0·02
„ per pound (brown) .. .. .	0·06
Tea (per pound) .. .. .	0·10
Tobacco, Leaf (per pound) .. .. .	0·08
„ Manufactured (per pound) .. .. .	0·25
„ Cigars (per hundred) .. .. .	0·33
„ Cigarettes (per hundred) .. .. .	0·12
Wines, Claret (per gallon) .. .. .	0·37
Champagne, Burgundy, Hock, Moselle, Sherry, Port, Madeira, Marsala, Canary, Saint Raphael, Wincarnis, medicinal and tonic wines, and Wines not otherwise specified (per gallon) .. .. .	1·00
All fruit syrups and trade wines of low alcoholic strength, such as Raspberry Wine, Raspberry Syrup, Raspberry Vinegar, Kola Wine, Ginger Wine, and Cider .. .. . (reputed quart bottle)	0·06
„ .. .. . (reputed pint bottle)	0·03
(Reputed pints shall be deemed not to exceed 4 gills imperial, and reputed quarts not to exceed 8 gills imperial.)	

## SECTION B.—EXPORTS

Article.	Rate of Duty. \$
Coffee seed, hulled (per bushel) .. .. .	1·50
„ „ unhulled (per bushel) .. .. .	0·50
Coffee Scions (per plant) .. .. .	0·50
Fibre (per pound) .. .. .	0·00½
Gutta Percha (per pound) .. .. .	0·12
Ivory (per pound) .. .. .	0·10
Palm Kernels (per bushel) .. .. .	0·02
Palm Oil, Boechina (per gallon) .. .. .	0·01
Palm Oil, Nechina (per gallon) .. .. .	0·05
Piassava (per pound) .. .. .	0·00½
Rubber (per pound) .. .. .	0·12

\$1=4s. 2d.



## CHAPTER VII

### FLORA

MY wonder and impatience have been often aroused by the appalling, repellent names which certain dull, unimaginative persons have ponderously and unfairly bestowed upon the many beautiful forest growths of this and other portions of Africa. I have seen in imagination large-headed, unhealthy-hued, spectacled faces set on shoulders rounded by a life-long absorption in a misbegotten devotion to the coining of cumbrous words. I have seen pale, tremulous, flabby lips mumbling with a kind of hideous joy such names as *Sarcophrynium brachystachyum*, *Rhynchospora wallichiana*, or *Paulowilhelmia polysperma*, and my imagination has involuntarily if erroneously depicted the personal appearance of the guilty parties. But the remarkable fact must be perfectly obvious to those whose interest in the subject of trees and flowers may have led them to peruse the often heavy, over-quoted pages of some of the works on the subject, that the practice of employing these (to most people) meaningless alphabetical processions is not confined to the scientific by training, habit, and conviction ; others there are, unhappily, who, possessing little in the way of well-grounded scientific attainment, seem nevertheless unable to resist the temptation to fill their pages with this sort of stuff ; printing appendices, apparently intended for the general reader, consisting of many pages of unintelligible botanical jargon whose use should be made penal outside the limits of the Royal Botanical Society's Gardens. The amazing cyr-

cism of these self-confessed sciolists says in effect : " If you have no knowledge of the scientific aspects of these subjects, leave them alone. Our task is not to instruct the ignorant." And so they go on their way, believing themselves surrounded by a halo of awe-inspired admiration, which is really something quite different. In the interests of clearness, therefore, and in the hope of rendering myself more intelligible to the ordinary unscientific reader, I have done what one may, in the



A familiar Parasitic Creeper.

course of this chapter, to dispense with terms not usually and conversationally employed.

But little studied assuredly, when we come to consider the vastness of the subject, the amazing, rampant vegetation of Liberia can only be compared to a book of immense size but few of whose opening pages have as yet been perfunctorially scanned. Its adequate examination would tax even the great resources of Kew, backed by the assistance of scores upon scores of trained botanists working continuously for many years. The appearance of the forest as one's eyes alight upon

it for the first time is beautiful, unusual, and impressive in the extreme. You see before you a dense, unbroken screen of leaves, leaves, leaves, of every shape and form and size and shade of green, but wall-like, impenetrable, almost forbidding in its apparent—indeed, its very real—solidity. The trees, but few of which possess names recognizable by the average European, grow very close together, their lower trunks usually completely masked by bush of the thickest and most intertwined description, whence numbers of creeping plants climb upward, often entirely covering up the foliage not of one but of several forest monsters, so that at a short distance they would appear, were it possible more or less to isolate them, rather like vast, rounded masses of close-growing creeper. If you manage to ascend one or other of the elevations which, here and there, spring “kopje-like,” as they say in South Africa, abruptly from the lower levels, the effect produced by the tree-tops is that of a limitless, green, billowy sea of unbroken verdure. But underneath this wonderful surface it is, in very truth, a land almost of darkness, a land of silence, where even the wild things of the deep, dense jungle are hushed, awed as it were by the immensity of the world of trees by which they are overwhelmed. Here few men come. It is the gloom that daunts them. The gloom, the silence, the eeriness of it all. Here they feel dwarfed, cramped, helpless. There is no horizon—but little light. The sun is almost—usually quite—invisible. The missing by but a few yards of the scarcely discernible path, and you may never find it again—or be found yourself.

In Europe we have no conception of such forests as these. We have read in our young days, no doubt, of the exploits of Robin Hood and his merry men under the leafy glades and shady thickets of Sherwood Forest, where they good-humouredly shot the King’s buck and recked little whence good fortune came so long as venison daily graced their table, and sound wine was there as well to distend the girdle of portly Friar Tuck. But, I fear me, not very much game would have fallen

to their stout yew bows had the Sherwood of that period resembled in any way the dark, trackless tree-growth which covers the Guinea Coast of to-day. These great forest monsters frequently grow so near to each other that their roots entangle in an extraordinary snake-like ravel, not below the surface of the ground always, but often above it, spreading away horizontally in the comparatively shallow alluvium which covers the rock beneath. They are in many cases absolutely hoary with age. There can be no doubt that many of them were waving their already lofty branches in the warm, soft African breeze when the great Armada sailed from Spain ; their giant limbs were being riven by the summer thunderbolt when Charles Stuart bared his neck to the axe. These trees are like nothing in Nature of which I have any knowledge. Huge buttressed trunks rear their vast leafy crowns a hundred feet and more into the sunshine ; they are tied and twisted and matted and bound to each other by a world of countless lianas and creepers and parasites and vines until, in many places, it becomes a matter of doubtful speculation if even the forceful elephant himself could make much impression upon such a barrier of vegetable solidity.

Imagine then, you who stay at home in the chilly north, the hopeless, helpless feeling of utter impotence which must settle like an icy shroud upon the soul of the botanist who would attempt to attack such a proposition as this ! Were the span of human existence thrice as long ; were human energy and effort tireless as those of the ant, one lifetime would seem all too short to enable the investigator to disclose the wonders which the forests of Liberia veil from our knowledge in their sunless depths. I will, therefore, begin this brief and necessarily imperfect disquisition upon the flora of the country by dealing first with those better known details of the cultivated orders which may soon—I hope very soon—attract still greater attention to the infinite scope which exists in Liberia for their practically unlimited cultivation.

One of the first of the handsome trees to claim our attention is that splendid Indian importation into Africa, the Mango. This fine growth is found everywhere near the sea-coast, as well as on the banks of those rivers where Americo-Liberian settlements have long been established. Its symmetrical, rounded form rises to a considerable height, sometimes sixty to seventy feet or more, its long membranous leaves changing during the season from deep coppery red to dark green. At the time of this transition, shortly before the flowering period, the appearance of these trees is striking and handsome to a degree. I do not think mangoes grow in Liberia to the same impressive size one sees them in the Valley of the Zambezi, where their trunks may measure not less than eighteen feet in circumference, and probably more. The wood is soft and workable, and not heavy and difficult to remove as is the case with so many of the African indigenous timber trees. But I think one of the most compelling beauties of the Mango is the surprising variety of harmonious shades with which it clothes itself at one and the same time. Tender green of newly-born foliage turns, as I have said, to rich red and dark green, which pales somewhat as the months advance, until it falls a rich, golden yellow ; but as the Mango puts forth its foliage practically all the year round—or so it seems to me—the variations in its colouring may usually be most strikingly observed just before the appearance of the flower. The fruit is disappointing, very redolent of turpentine, and wholly destitute of the rich, luscious flavours of the East African varieties.

In all Liberian settlements, a near neighbour of the Mango is sure to be the singularly beautiful and somewhat curious Bread-Fruit, a tree which must have been introduced by the early settlers. Its large, glossy foliage, faintly resembling immense fig-leaves, is extremely beautiful and ornamental, and is of a dark lustrous green. About the month of March the fruits appear ; they are circular in shape, and about the size of a child's head, and though promising, in their

yellowish appearance, possess when cooked a somewhat vague, disappointing flavourlessness. They are, of course, properly speaking, a vegetable and not a fruit, as we understand the word. The tree grows to no great height—thirty or forty feet perhaps—and, unfortunately, its fine, unusual foliage is rather marred by its decided tendency to straggle.

The Coco-nut Palm, as I have stated elsewhere, is found all over the coast-line, consorting with Oil Palms, Phoenix Palms, and others. I have already dealt at some length with the first two named, but I think perhaps a few words may be spared for the eminently useful is not very impressive Phoenix. In other parts of the great continent, Phoenix Palms supply the African with string and rope for all purposes. This is torn from the long, rigid fronds, and either employed at once as it is, or twisted and plaited into ropes of considerable strength. These fronds, moreover, serve a useful purpose for roof-thatching, as also for making fascinating and admirably constructed baskets for the marketing of fruit, vegetables, eggs, and other native commodities. This plant is really, I suppose, a degraded wild date; the female inflorescence, which appears on branches two or three feet long, resulting in a fruit distantly resembling dates, rapidly sweet, and digestible, I should imagine, only by African stomachs. They are, however, eagerly sought in times of famine, and are also greatly relished by the elephants.

Another very handsome growth of the palm orders which, however, usually appears at some little distance from the ocean, is the really splendid Borassus Palm. I have often wondered which is really the finer in appearance, the Coco-nut or the Borassus. It is really a little hard to say. The former is the embodiment of grace, which is almost feminine when compared with the straight, stern, uncompromisingly masculine appearance of the somewhat less lofty, but more firmly planted Borassus. Everything about it is straight and stiff. The trunk is like the mast of a ship, were it not for the curious swelling which appears at a little distance

below the crown of large, dull-green fronds, in all respects similar to those of the well-known fan palm of India, from which I believe it to be indistinguishable. Borassus palms spring to a height of about sixty or seventy feet, the trunk furnishing most durable timber which, if desired, will take a high and very beautiful polish. This palm, like the Phoenix, the Coco-nut, and others, yields the palm-wine so often referred to in books of African travel. This is obtained by entirely cutting away the crown of fronds, and making a small canal from the bald patch which succeeds them. Down and along this the sap (which is, of course, the palm-wine) flows slowly into a calabash, or earthen jar, suspended below with a plaited grass hood to keep away the wild bees and other intoxicant-loving insects. The contents are collected at nightfall and in the early morning. Freshly drawn and carefully strained through fine muslin, palm-wine is a most pleasant and refreshing drink ; it is sweet, and at the same time a little acid, and looks exactly like soapy water. Kept for a few days it ferments and becomes decidedly heady, in which state it is greatly esteemed by the African. Its flavour, and above all its smell, have by now become so terrible that no European could longer face it. The extraction of the sap in course of time kills the palm, and I therefore think its consumption should be strongly discouraged. A palm-wine country is very easily distinguished. Nearly all the palms are crownless, and present something of the appearance of random-placed telegraph poles of varying height which have been abandoned in the wilds. To the valuable *Raphia Palm* and its product, *piassava*, I have already referred ; this, and the curious *Calamus*, which although a palm is really a creeper, practically exhaust the members of the palm family, so far as we know at present.

One of the best distributed of the more prominent trees to which the traveller's attention is soon drawn for one reason or another is the really fine cotton tree or *Bombax*. In Liberia this species appears to grow to greater size than in East or South Central Africa. At

the flowering season it becomes perfectly gorgeous. It is then a tall, somewhat stiff-limbed growth, bright with scarlet flowers, and rising to a height of forty or fifty feet ; but much of the beauty of its astonishing flower-display is marred by the ungraceful stiffness of its limbs, which stick out almost at right angles from the straight-springing trunk, like a huge many-armed boy holding out his hands to be caned. The flowers soon fall, whereupon the air turns faint with their sickly perfume. The resulting kapok, or silk-cotton, is used to some extent for stuffing cushions with, in yachting circles, are esteemed for the possession of the appreciable quality of extreme buoyancy and lightness. These trees attain to very considerable girth, which I have never seen equalled elsewhere.

Bamboos are common near the coast, especially upon the banks of the more important rivers, where, no doubt, they have been planted by the early settlers. It is stated that they are also found upon the high country of the far interior, as there is, of course, no reason why they should not. Those seen by me upon the banks of the St. Paul River present no apparent points of difference when compared with varieties with which I am familiar in other parts of the continent. I have, however, not yet seen any of the poles equal in size to those of certain portions of the Portuguese Province of Mozambique, where they may frequently be seen fourteen or fifteen inches in circumference, and are of great value for building and other purposes. This beautiful grass—for Bamboo is the largest of all the grasses—is a most rapid and prolific grower, and once introduced into favourable surroundings, unless it have plenty of space in which to expand, becomes something of a nuisance. In early summer the young shoots appear. They grow at a prodigious rate—a foot or more in twenty-four hours—and speedily harden from a carrot-like consistence into the tough cane for which the growth is so highly regarded. As a garden ornament, however, it has its drawbacks. Its leaves, than which no more rapid fattener of an out-of-condition horse



could be found, are perpetually falling, and unless the gardener be endowed with more patience than usually distinguishes that functionary, he will soon grow weary of the eternal sweeping which the presence of bamboos necessitates.

Turning to trees, probably quite the most important is the generally, if somewhat unevenly, distributed Mahogany. This tree attains to very great size, especially in the more central portions of the Republic. Unhappily, as in the case of another which has been described to me, and which I think, if my readers will pardon an unavoidable lapse, must be the *Adina microcephala*, or some very closely allied form, the timber is so heavy, and the existing means of transport so inadequate, that it is practically impossible at present to get the logs down to the sea-coast. With reference to the latter, the timber of this fine tree is exceedingly durable, and so hard that I firmly believe it to be impervious alike to the attacks of white ants and the borers. Many years ago, when I was serving at the British Consulate at Mozambique, the consular residence was an exceedingly old building stated to have been used as the headquarters of the Dutch commander when the island was unsuccessfully besieged by vessels of that nation in 1603. The main beams which supported the ponderous roof were of this wood, and had grown so hard that it was impossible either to drive a screw or to knock a nail into them.

Of the various other trees in Liberia known to afford workable timber, there must be fully twenty or more ; but as their native names would convey nothing to my European readers, and the accuracy of their present classification is doubtful, I can do no more than afford brief descriptions of those which appear to me to be among the most important.

A very tall, straight-trunked growth, which seems to yield most excellent timber for building purposes, is singularly devoid of branches until the rounded, dark-foliaged top is reached. The wood itself is hard, close-grained, of a dark reddish colour, and is not unfragrant.

Another which has become familiar to me is of smaller size, and bears at certain seasons a yellowish, plum-like fruit. This yields an easily workable, white timber not unlike spruce, which would be suitable for purposes for which that well-known wood is so widely



A Gomphia.

used. From white wood to black is but a simple and natural transition, and thus we next consider ebony, of which two kinds have been reported. This I have never seen, although, had I met with it, the *Diospyros* variety would have been familiar enough. This class of ebony is said to grow to considerable girth in various parts of

the interior, but I have sometimes suspected from the descriptions given that the greater part of the product referred to may have been the wood of a species of *Dalbergia*. This is a tree of medium height, the trunk about four or five feet in diameter, displaying in its season a loose inflorescence of white, butterfly-wing shaped flowers preceding thin, pod-like seed-vessels. This *Dalbergia* is very widely distributed in Africa, and abounds on the mainland near the island of Mozambique, whence I have seen exported large quantities of what the Portuguese call *Madeira preta*, a black wood which, without possessing the hardness or value of ebony, is nevertheless largely used in the manufacture of cheap knife-handles and many similar things.

Various acacias, which I am unable to identify, mingle their unmistakable foliage with that of coarser growths, as does also a fine-leaved *Albizzia*, which seems to be of much smaller size, and to offer many important differences from other varieties known elsewhere. An unmistakable *Parinarium* rears its straight, lofty trunk a hundred feet above one's head, towering high above *Xylopias* with their aromatic fruit; *Spondias*, or the "Yellow plum" as they have come to be called; *Pycnanthus*, whose seeds are said to contain over seventy per cent. of oil; another oil-seed producer not unlike the growth discovered by me in South-East Africa and called *Balanites maughanii*, and many other nameless forest varieties. Farther on your eye is sure to be caught by one or other of several quaint species of tufted dragon trees. This curious form which, so far as I know, is of no particular value, except perhaps for surrounding gardens in the shape of a fascinating living fence, is nevertheless a most picturesque detail of the Liberian landscape. Some of these, which may be seen growing by the waters of the Stockton Creek, reach a very considerable height, others again develop but little in the way of timber, and display their quaint, tuft-like foliage at the ends of long pot-hook-like limbs. The flower is white, its place being taken by bright red seeds. Near the coast a

very fine, extremely coarse-leaved tree of medium height, whose falling foliage is a sad nuisance when it falls into one's grounds, may be found in great abundance. About the month of September it loads itself with heavy bunches of bright red seed-vessels each about the size of a large orange. These contain a varying number of bright yellow seeds of pleasant, sweet, date-like flavour, embedded in a slimy, carmine-coloured flesh which looks particularly unpleasing. As the trunks of these trees leave the ground, they form massive buttresses after the manner of the *Bombax* ; the timber is very good, and of a somewhat deep red in the middle.

A very singular growth, which can scarcely call itself a tree nor yet a shrub, is entirely unknown to me by name. I am unaware if it fulfils any useful purpose beyond adding vastly to the picturesqueness of its often uninteresting surroundings. This I have learned to call the Umbrella Tree, since the disposition of its leaves, of which I give a drawing, is precisely that which might have been employed to point man to the comparative protection which an umbrella affords him. The Umbrella Tree never seems to grow to a great height ; twenty feet may perhaps be a good average, but as it selects very thick bush for the scene of its outlook on life, it is a little hard to afford a reliable estimate. Two or three curious, rock-like euphorbias are to be seen near the coast, their unlovely, leafless, hairy branches partially concealed by *Convolvuli* and other creepers.

The rivers and creeks are profusely lined, near the sea-coast, with deep, dense mangrove thickets. Probably few who have not travelled in the tropics know exactly what a mangrove thicket is like, whilst others probably look upon the tree as some exquisite form covered with balsamic clusters of tropical flowers, and yielding a rare and refreshing fruit, confounding it with the mango, to which, of course, it is in no way allied. Turning to a work doubtless written for purposes of enlightenment, the unscientific seeker after knowledge would find that the Mangrove, "*Rhizophora racemosa*,

is a shrub or small tree with opposite broad lanceolate very coreaceous leaves, dichotomous axillary, corymbs of greenish yellow tetramerous flowers with very coreaceous sepals and ovoid fruits germinating on the tree." Having carefully noted this clear, simple, and informing description, the seeker closes the book with a sigh, and perhaps a vague feeling that he has gleaned all



The Umbrella Tree.

that there is to glean on the subject, but wishing that he understood what on earth it meant ; and there would be reason in his regret if he were a business man, for mangrove bark is a valuable merchantable article if it be obtained from the right tree. But, described in comprehensible language—a tongue far too often neglected by your *soi-disant* possessor of that elusive quality called special knowledge—the Mangrove of West

Africa, whose presence too often imparts such a lugubrious appearance to what would otherwise be beautifully wooded, smiling water-ways, is an evergreen, bushy tree rising to thirty to thirty-five feet high, whose roots thrive in the blackest, most treacherous, and most forbidding of ooze. Sometimes its trunks grow so close together that it is almost impossible to force a way between them, whilst the thick, "very coreaceous" leaves are so dense as to produce beneath a dismal, gloomy twilight. The roots of the Mangrove look like some ghastly prodigy seen in a disordered dream. They remind you in their bone-like, naked, arching ugliness of a suggestion for prehistoric crinolines, as they might be imagined and portrayed by Mr. Heath Robinson. The leaves are small, dull green, very thick and entirely unpossessed, as are the flowers, of any attraction, whilst the bark is grey and scabrous.

There are several kinds of mangroves, some of which propagate in an interesting manner. In one case the lower limbs throw down long tufts of roots, which strike on reaching the mud below; another lets fall a seed provided with a long green point, which anchors it to the mud on dropping; another again produces a seed which germinates upon the parent tree, and so on. But let the enthusiast retain his enthusiasm for the Mangrove as he will. I regard it as an almost useless ugliness—a horrible, gloomy excrescence upon the face of the African coast lands.

We now come to the rubber producers, which are extremely numerous, and include some very valuable examples. Of these, there are several highly important vines, including the well-known *Landolphia owariensis* and five or six more, all of which, I believe, are more or less valuable and plentiful rubber producers. Among them we find *L. florida*, whose rubber in West Africa appears to be of but little value, primarily owing to the difficulty attending coagulation. The first mentioned, although a climber, is properly speaking a climbing shrub rather than a vine. This plant all over Africa is esteemed to be one of the best of the indigenous

rubber producers, and its reputation in Liberia is just as good. The remaining *Landolphias* possess a lesser degree of importance, and some of them are stated to be quite valueless. I do not attempt to describe them, did I do so, I might with justice be accused of obtaining my information from the same *Child's Useful Book of Knowledge* from which I culled the quotation descriptive of the Mangrove.

But one very fine and plentiful producer of Liberian rubber is a most gigantic forest tree of great height and girth, which is said to rear itself to a height of over one hundred feet. This is the *Funtumia elastica*. Another member of the same family, *F. africana*, does not attain to anything like the same proportions, whilst the sap, or latex, which is, of course, the rubber, is commercially valueless. I understand that the former is chiefly to be found in the hinterland of Sinoe County, and in portions of Maryland, where, however, I have not been able to ascertain that it is very generously distributed. In addition to the foregoing, there are a number of fig trees, I think about four or five, all of which produce some rubber, several being very productive. They are not striking as a whole, being covered with large, coarse, serrated leaves, some of which are glossy and dark, with a paler shade of green on the underside. One or more of these varieties possesses the same peculiarity as the mangroves, namely that of propagating by means of the emission from the lower limbs of adventitious roots which strike on contact with the ground.

Some of the shrubs of the Liberian forests are very beautiful, and would, I think, well repay an effort to transfer them to Europe, where many should do well under glass. Most of these, so far as I can judge, belong to the leguminous order, and include one very lovely shrubby growth covered with smooth, tender green, oval leaves disclosing soft racemes of bright yellow flowers. Another, whose seed-vessels take the shape of hard pods, produces an exquisite inflorescence of deliciously deep lilac. Still another, apparently a member of the same order, displays the same flowers

but snowy white. Several *Baphias*, one covered with pleasantly scented white flowers, are not uncommon, with their slender racemes of tremulous, bee-surrounded, delicate white blooms. A similar form of this family produces that deep red dye formerly much exported, but now, unhappily, of small commercial value, called camwood.

Of creepers there are large numbers to be found in the forests, some of the members of the wide family of the *Convolvuli* being extraordinarily beautiful. There is one of whose name I am entirely ignorant, which simply covers the trees and bushes sometimes for considerable distances. It throws its thick mantle of greenery, which forms an appropriate and fascinating background for its countless tender mauve blooms, so completely over underlying objects as entirely to conceal them. I have seen large forest trees which this plant had climbed separately and in which the runners had come together in the branches above, covering them so completely that neither trunk nor foliage was discernible. Of monkey-ropes and lianas, these forests are full; they stretch from tree to tree like giant swings, and add greatly, in the few places where the dense jungle growth is not too thick to admit of their observation, to the wild, fantastic bizarrerie of the forest. Many of the climbing species, whose name is legion, possess but little in the way of attractiveness, with the exception of one very beautiful bushy creeper, which does not attain to a greater height than ten or twelve feet. Its dark, glossy leaves are small and lancet-shaped, and about the middle of the rainy season it clothes itself with bright, deep-blue, trumpet-shaped flowers with a white centre. Nothing more striking or ornamental could well be imagined during its all too brief flowering period. Another attractive plant of similar climbing habit which, I fancy, is either a *Eudenia* or something very like it, has curious clusters of yellowish flowers in racemes, a formation in which the stalks of the lower blooms are longer than those of the upper.



Among the multitudinous bushes may be seen, in low-lying country, two *Anonas* producing, in the case of one, that much esteemed fruit the sour-sop. It is a small, not very attractive tree of smooth trunk, and, in their season, bright yellow flowers. It is stated by some authorities to be a native of the West Indies or South America, and not indigenous to Africa at all ; but this is a point upon which differences of opinion occur. Personally I am unable to discern any importance in it, although, of course, to the investigator everything is of importance. It seems possible, when you come to think of it, that at the height of its popularity as a means of communication, some hurrying pedestrian passing over the Eocene bridge which, we are told, at one time united the African and American continents, may have provided himself at a stall on the way with a bag of sour-sops, some of whose seeds may have germinated on his arrival on African soil—or the converse may have taken place ; but I fear this is as near to the elusive truth touching this burning and urgent question as our preoccupied scientists are likely to reach. In any case, I recommend the ingenious theory to their careful and earnest consideration.

Among the lower forms, your eye is at once attracted by a very singular, somewhat poinsettia-like shrub which has come to be called the *Mussænda*. The leaves, of dull but vivid green, clothe fairly straight, slender branches terminating in very pretty flowers of bright orange, which faintly recall the blooms of that handsome semi-tropical creeper the golden-shower. The outer calyx or protective petal, called in botany, I believe, a sepal, being of the whitest possible cream colour. This bush occurs all over West Africa, and possibly its very general distribution may have diverted appreciation from its many beauties. I cannot imagine any more interesting experiment than to endeavour to obtain its growth in England under glass.

One of the most charming features of the warm, rain-sodden Liberian coast is to be found in the immense quantities of lovely green ferns which may everywhere

be seen. Bracken, indistinguishable from our home variety, occurs over wide expanses, and grows to a great size ; but the commonest variety is a fern with very large but delicate fronds which insinuates its rapidly running roots into the inequalities of the many stone walls of the settlements, transforming them in the course of a year or so into pretty, moss-grown ferneries. It would be difficult to imagine a more charming or commoner spectacle than a half-grown Phoenix Palm surrounded from top to bottom by the bright greenery of the ferns rooted in the decayed matter left in the inequalities whence its fronds have fallen. Even the massive crown affords hospitality to scores upon scores of tiny fern rootlets, and appears as though surrounded, at the base of each waving limb, by a deliciously ornamental covering of ferns. I have not observed any of the more delicate varieties of the maiden-hair types, which are so common in the forest ravines of South Central Africa ; but long "hart's-tongue,"-like parasites, growing in the forks of the larger trees, are frequently seen, and are most picturesque.

Lovely blue water-lilies cover the inland lagoons, which are surrounded by rushes, high grasses, and transparent green arums whose foliage grows, in some cases, to a gigantic size, whilst delicate white—and pink and white—crinum lilies may be seen growing plentifully along the road-sides far from the water which is believed elsewhere to be indispensable to their well-being. In the lower, moister levels, the plant which yields an aromatic, peppery product known as "grains of paradise" may be seen, with other members of the same family, displaying attractive if somewhat quaintly shaped flowers dimly recalling small irises, but of pale salmon-pink tinged with yellow. For many years the West African coasts were resorted to by vessels of many nations, all engaged in the trade of which this curious pepper was the most valued detail. So much was this the case that, at the time of the arrival of the earlier Liberian settlers, this division of the western projection of Africa was known as the

" Grain Coast," a name which it still bears even in some comparatively recent maps.

Turning to domestic flora, the more valuable items of which I have dealt with in a previous chapter, the Liberian gardens contain many attractive plants, some of which are, of course, natives of other lands. Among these, first and foremost, come the Orange, Lime, and Banana. It is only fair to suppose that all these have been introduced at one time or another. They all bear acceptable fruit, and thrive well in the moist, warm Liberian climate. Cassava (manioc), rice, yams, maize, sugar-cane, and pumpkins are largely grown, and in so far as relates to the first three, form the staple food both of Liberians and of the indigenous natives. In addition to these, however, the tomato, sweet-potato, ground nut, avocado pear, pine-apple, guava, and a fruit, or rather vegetable, of the mallow family called *Okri*, are all cultivated, but not by any means to the extent whereat they could be regarded as very plentiful. Hemp and tobacco are likewise produced and smoked, but of the latter the larger proportion consumed is undoubtedly imported from Europe.

The gardens of Liberian houses, with very few exceptions, are not particularly remarkable for the beauty or diversity of their flowers. Roses are cultivated, but seldom reach to more than a lanky, weak tree producing a poor, sickly flower, possessing but little perfume, and which quickly falls. Another so-called rose is perhaps the most degraded type of bloom it has ever been my lot to see. This latter has a most unpleasant, earthy smell, and scarcely repays the trouble of cultivation. Apart from these, very fine crotons of variegated colouring may be seen ; strongly-scented oleanders, as also a very beautiful, low tree, the leafy ends of whose soft, spongy branches are gay with clusters of delicate, waxy, creamy-white, yellow-centred flowers of rather disagreeably strong odour. The bright scarlet, trumpet-shaped flowers of a very richly coloured Hibiscus are seen everywhere, and occasionally that remarkable type of banana from which clear, wholesome water in surprising quan-

titles may be drawn by the thirsty wayfarer, and which in Zanzibar and elsewhere in the East has long been known as the "Travellers' Palm."

Such, condensed into a few book pages, is an inadequate sketch of a flora which, for richness and diversity of character, would perhaps find few equals, not even excepting the famed Brazilian forests bordering the mighty Amazon. Any adequate description of it would suffice to fill half a dozen portly volumes, whilst the details still awaiting discovery would probably exhaust the space afforded by as many more. Where he should begin upon such a mighty task is a question which might well puzzle and daunt the keenest investigator—when he would conclude it is a problem which no human *prévoyance* could possible forecast. Liberia, in her flora and geology, consists of a portion of Africa possessing more attractions for scientists and capitalists than perhaps any other whose resources are known to us, and I feel sure that one day, when all that she has of interest and profit shall have been laid bare, some of the greatest and most surprising discoveries will connect themselves with these forests which have hitherto, by their vastness and impenetrability, proved a sealed book to the puny and perfunctory efforts which, so far, have endeavoured to read it. All that I have found it possible to touch upon, compared with the gigantic whole, is, needless to say, but as a drop of water in a goodly bucket—a grain of sand upon the wide sea-shore.

## CHAPTER VIII

### FAUNA: MAMMALS

THE sum of our available knowledge of the Liberian fauna is scanty in the extreme ; almost, if not quite, as much so as what we know of its trees and flowers. For this the reason connects itself chiefly with the density of the forests, and the consequent difficulty of investigating the character of its mammalian and other inhabitants. In many other portions of Africa, the pursuit or observation of animals in forest, which is scarcely forest compared with that of Liberia, bristles with difficulties; how much more so is this the case where your range of vision is limited to a few feet, and the noise of your progress fills your ears and penetrates perhaps twenty times as far, I leave my readers to imagine. Still, there are many forest forms of great interest whose presence is quite unmistakable, and of these I will endeavour to afford some idea, beginning with the elephants.

The interior of the country contains large herds of these mighty pachyderms, upon whose numbers, it is stated, the assaults of ivory-hunting natives have not succeeded in making any very appreciable impression. The western and north-western divisions are said to be most populous, and here, according to the accounts of travellers, one may journey for days along the well-worn tracks, or "elephant roads," which these animals make, and which they use with great regularity. But among the many other secrets which the forests of Liberia hide from us, is that of the class or classes

of elephant which find a refuge in them. You may go from one end of the country to the other, and nobody can give you trustworthy information concerning them. It is said, and I believe with truth, that there are several types of this huge beast to be found in Liberia; one of great size and unexampled ferocity, whose tusks are comparatively small, and another only five or six feet high, which is in all probability identical with the semi-amphibious form recently discovered and shot on the Congo by Mr. J. Rowland Evans. This latter type has also been reported from North-Eastern Rhodesia. In Liberia they are undoubtedly well known to the natives, and their small tails and tusks are not infrequently brought into the settlements for sale. On being disturbed, they are said to take at once to water, wherein they remain immersed, with the exception of the tip of the trunk, until satisfied that they may safely emerge once more. The natives whom I have interrogated, and who stated that they had seen and killed elephants of the type described, were unanimous on these points, which I am sure are quite trustworthy. Regarding one very interesting detail relative to the larger variety they were also very insistent, namely, that they do not possess ears anything like so large as those from South-Central and East Africa, photographs of which I showed them. This, if it should prove to be true, is an exceedingly important piece of information, pointing in the direction of a class of African elephant as yet unknown to us. But, as those who know him best sadly realize, the native has usually little interest in any animal apart from its value either as an article of profit or food, and, in the absence of more trustworthy evidence, I feel a little disinclined to attach too much importance to these particulars, unsupported, as they are at present, by anything more substantial than the African's proverbially treacherous memory for such things.

Whatever may be the facts relating to the elephants themselves, certain it is that, considering the large numbers with which all authorities are unanimous in

crediting the country, the output of ivory is extremely disappointing; whilst the sizes of individual tusks of what may be considered the first magnitude are small and insignificant compared with many which have been obtained farther along the same parallel of latitude as that which runs through the very centre of Liberia. From these facts it is perhaps not unreasonable to conjecture unforeseen differences in the animals themselves, and these are matters which those interested in the future of this splendid animal will gladly see satisfactorily set at rest.

There is no trace, so far as I can ascertain, of any form of rhinoceros in Liberia, a circumstance which is not surprising when the character of the greater part of the country is taken into account. The rhinoceros, in my experience, which coincides with that of many other hunters and observers of great game, is a beast which abhors the jungle. The haunts of its predilection are those covered by patchy thorn bush occurring in thinly grassed plains, the country, as a whole, being dry and stony. I have, indeed, often thought that the gradual extension eastward of the tremendous Congo forests may have been the influence directly responsible for separating the almost extinct white rhinoceros of South Africa from the recently discovered members of the same family who have been found inhabiting, in considerable numbers, portions of the country through which flow the upper waters of the Nile. Be this as it may, neither the white rhinoceros of the Lado Enclave nor his relative the black variety of almost all Africa over, has as yet been found in any portion of Liberia so far as our present knowledge extends.

Although the term "Liberian hippopotamus" is usually taken to refer exclusively to the small pigmy variety which seems to be found only in this and neighbouring parts of Africa, and in spite of the very definite statements made by other writers that this form is the only one present, the large common hippopotamus, that immense aquatic creature second in size only to the elephant, nevertheless occurs in more than one



**THE LIBERIAN DWARF HIPPOPOTAMUS.**



**ORDINARY AFRICAN HIPPOPOTAMUS.**





**GRIMM'S DUIKER.**



**A TRAPPED LEOPARD.**

of the Liberian rivers, notably it is said in the Dukwia and Farmington, in the Nuon, and doubtless elsewhere. I have been informed by Europeans, in whose statements confidence may be placed, that they have seen hippopotami of great size in the streams mentioned, and although not numerous, the question of their presence in the country seems to me to have been placed entirely at rest.

The small dwarf variety, whose discovery a few years ago aroused so much interest, is very far from scarce. The first members of this surprising family to reach Europe were sold for fabulous sums, in comparison with those later realized, for, no sooner did it become apparent that European collectors were anxious to secure so singular a specimen of the African mammalia, than all and sundry in Liberia, at once flung themselves upon the tracks of the easily caught pigmy, with the natural result that in a very short time these animals became a drug in the market, and still remain so. The dwarf hippopotamus is about three feet high by about three feet six inches or a little more in length. He is by no means a miniature of his immense ordinary relative, the legs being conspicuously thin and pig-like, as he is in all respects with the exception of his large hippopotamus-like head. I have seen in a publication written by Sir H. H. Johnston a singular illustration, drawn and coloured by that prolific writer, depicting two brightly blue-tinted dwarf hippopotami of a hue so amazing that it almost took one's breath away. These also seemed in all essential respects to be reduced fac-similes of the ordinary large animal. As a matter of fact the dwarf hippopotamus has not been found, save in the realms of imagination, corresponding to the colour scheme with which Johnston endowed these two. The skin coloration of these animals is, in reality, practically the same as that of any other hippopotamus, if, perhaps, slightly less pink in its tendency—a result doubtless produced by their preference for dry land instead of for constant immersion. The same writer further estimates the weight of the

dwarf hippopotamus at about one-third that of his larger relative; but when we take into consideration what evidently our author did not know, namely that the latter turns the scale at from *three to three and a half tons*, I fear that his estimate of the weight of the smaller beast can scarcely be regarded as entirely trustworthy.

This curious little creature does not, as I have just stated, frequent water to any great extent—probably not more than that singular, semi-amphibious antelope of Central Africa, the Situtunga. He invariably passes his nights in the bush, and, it is said by the natives, when sound asleep, a curious, milky-white sweat exudes from his skin so that, on being awakened, he looks as though his colour had undergone a complete change. Ashore he runs with great speed, but on alarm does not always take to water, frequently doubling back into dense jungle in preference to seeking refuge in the rivers. The female produces one calf at a birth, which takes place ashore about the middle of the rainy season, namely, July or August. The period of gestation is not known, but, judging by the circumstance that the months of January and February are considered the most favourable for their capture, it is probable that this may be the mating season, whereat they would naturally be more restless than at other times; from these facts we may perhaps be permitted to suppose that the gestatory time may extend to about six months. After capture these animals rapidly grow reconciled to captivity, and are easily fed upon potatoes, cabbage leaves, and other similar items of vegetable diet; in fact they present no greater difficulties to preserve in good condition than would a domesticated wild hog, some of whose habits they are said to share. There are understood to be two buffaloes in Liberia: the Congolese dwarf red buffalo, commonly called the "bush cow," and, in the north, the Sénégalèse type. The former appears almost throughout West Africa, and is, there can be no doubt, a forest-loving animal which has degenerated from a form perhaps not very

dissimilar from that of his immense relative the so-called Cape buffalo, to which he now bears but little resemblance.

The Congolese dwarf red buffalo, except in the case of a very old animal whose skin displays no longer very much in the way of hirsute embellishment, does not vary very much in its hue as it passes through life. On the whole, I should be inclined to call the prevailing tinge dirty, dark ochreous yellow rather than red. Major Stevenson-Hamilton is of opinion that the dwarf red buffalo is merely a less specialized type than that which is found in East and South Central Africa, and with this view I entirely concur, since it will probably be found that the buffaloes of Central and Western Equatorial Africa, in comparison with the great black Cape animal, have a distinct leaning, both in size, colouring, and other respects, towards the smaller type which we are now considering. The remaining form found in Liberia is a smaller variety still. I have been informed that, although not entirely absent from the forests, it is in that portion of the country which is not far from the open, rolling plains of the north that they are most plentifully to be found. Still, their distribution is fairly general, and even in the forest itself their traces may not infrequently be seen. These buffaloes are of a somewhat dingy reddish black, and, unlike the great black variety of the plains of Zambesia, do not roam the country in large herds. The horns of the two varieties of West African buffaloes are quite dissimilar in shape and general appearance; those of the dwarf red type being rugged and comparatively massive at the base, and for almost half their length, the smooth portion springing outward and then inclining backward. The head of the S n galese variety, on the other hand, is by no means so handsome; the base of the horn displaying little if anything of that striking ruggedness so characteristic of both the Cape and the Congolese buffaloes. They incline backward slightly, and then curve somewhat forward at the tips.

Both the smaller types of buffalo share with their

larger relative the desperate, reckless ferocity for which the great black Cape variety has become so unpleasantly famous. If wounded or otherwise brought to bay, the greatest coolness and presence of mind must be exercised if a fatal mishap is to be avoided. Many lives have been lost through the charges of these animals, that of poor Guy Dawnay, who was killed some few years ago by a red buffalo, being a lamentable case in point.

Turning to the flesh-eaters, there are apparently no lions in the southern portion of Liberia, whatever there may be in the open country to the north, where it would seem they are not unknown. One or two Mandingo friends of mine have recognized a lion skin in my possession as that of an animal which is found, though not plentifully, in their country. Of course, lions as a whole are not forest-loving animals—at any rate they do not appreciate forest so dense as that of the Guinea Coast, and thus, I suppose, their absence from fully 80 per cent. of Liberia may be easily accounted for. Of leopards, on the other hand, there are enough, nay more than enough, to satisfy the most exacting.

The skins of leopards seen and examined by me appeared to differ in no very special respect from those which I have shot in South-East Africa. It has been stated that Liberian leopards grow to a great size, one writer mentioning skins said to have been seen by him which almost equalled that of a small lioness. Of course, we know that before the skin is dried, much may be done by judicious stretching to produce this effect. Personally, I have seen nothing abnormal in the sizes of local leopard skins—nothing, in a word, which would enable me to distinguish much difference between those examined and skins from elsewhere on the continent. They are all beautifully marked with fine, distinct, black rosettes, but if there was anything to afford me an indication that any given skin was of Liberian origin, it might have been found in the unusual darkness of the sulphur-coloured ground which

occurs on the neck and shoulders, and the profuse distribution of the spots which there occur. Almost all leopards have this curious rich tinge at the points mentioned, as well as upon the head; it is quite a varying feature, however, and in the cases of some may be hardly noticeable. I have seen several skins in Liberia in which this third colour, so to call it, was extremely pronounced, and have been led to the conclusion that, all things considered, the forest animal may attain to a greater darkness than would be observable in the case of those frequenting mountain and open country.

Among the smaller cats, some of which exact a heavy toll from the fowl-run and the dove-cote, may be mentioned a civet, one or two so-called tiger-cats, and a serval. Of one of these, which he calls the "Golden cat," a remarkably interesting picture is published in one of his books by Sir H. H. Johnston, and is unmistakably the work of that writer. The animal depicted is apparently quite touchingly tame, a very rare instance of their becoming so, and is shown basking contentedly in the genial warmth of a large camp fire.

Hyenas and jackals are reported from the open country to the north, but no information of a reliable character is forthcoming to enable their correct classification to be determined. Other flesh-eaters are the mongoose families, of which there are two or three, two otters, and the Palm Civet or Paradoxure, a very fascinating little creature with a long, rather bushy tail.

Of the antelopes we know very little, and that knowledge is confined, with one exception, to the smaller of the varieties. There can be no doubt, at all events I have none, that near the Sierra Leone-Liberia frontier, and thence extending both east and westward, as well as into French territory, the Great Derbeian Eland is to be found. One was shot a short time ago by my friend Major J. Statham within the area I have mentioned, whilst a very ardent French sportsman, M. Gustave de Coutouly, has informed me that French Guinea, which extends round the northern political limits

of Sierra Leone, contains many of these magnificent creatures, all of which I would gladly see rigorously and sedulously preserved for ever. Where the Derbeian Eland occurs, the western Sing-song antelope should also be found, as well as the western form of the roan antelope, the western Hartebeeste, and several other interesting types, the presence of none of which can be determined as yet with certainty. I consider, however, that, as time passes, all, or almost all, of these will in turn be reported from the northern limits of the country. But of all the hoofed animals known to exist in Liberia, the most important and attractive is the splendid Bongo antelope. This majestic and at the same time brilliantly coloured creature is reported at many points of the forest country, and is, no doubt, almost identical with the Bongo of East Africa and Uganda. Very roughly described, this antelope may be likened to a gigantic bush-buck somewhat smaller than an eland. Robed in a mantle of rich golden red, the dorsal ridge is traced by a conspicuous mane, black over the withers and whitening at the croup in a line which runs for some distance down its long, cow-like tail. The body is striped like a kudu's with eight or ten well-defined, snow-white stripes, the kudu's white inverted face-chevron being also to some extent copied. The undersides and insides of the thighs pale from cream to white, whilst the horns are shaped almost like those of a giant bush-buck, or perhaps it would be more correct to compare them to those of an immense situtunga—the resemblance to the latter extending even to the semi-transparent, straw-coloured tips which the latter so unfailingly displays. The Bongo, it is said, like its distant relative the Inyala, frequents the deepest, densest, and most impenetrable portion of the forest, but never, so far as I have been able to ascertain, leaves his fastnesses for the open country. He drinks twice daily, and spends the whole of the daylight hours in browsing quietly his aimless way through the thick undergrowth. Exceedingly shy and wary, once alarmed he displays astonishing activity in getting out of the

way; laying his horns along the back of his neck, and dashing off like a kudu with nose extended. The young, which are understood to make their appearance about the month of October, at the end of the long rainy season, are born of a dull yellow colour, and possess, in addition to the stripes seen on the flanks of the parents, spots which fade away in later life. The food of these animals consists of the leaves and seed-vessels of a somewhat acacia-like tree, whose name is as yet unrecorded; they are also said to be extremely fond of a variety of forest fruits, as well as of Liberian coffee, the sweet pulpy covering of the berries attracting them at times from the forest into the remoter plantations where they have been known to do considerable damage.

Duikers are well represented. Grimm's Duiker, found all over Africa from Abyssinia to the Cape of Good Hope, is very common; there are, in addition, Ogilvy's Duiker, of much darker colour than the last named; Jentink's Duiker, whose smudge of white upon the shoulder, and curious backward-bent horns render it unique among members of the species; the Black Duiker which, needless to say, is not in the least black; Maxwell's Duiker, presenting no special features appealing to ordinary individuals; the tiny Zebra Duiker, whose resemblance to the Zebra can only be traced by a gigantic effort of imagination, the Yellow-backed Duiker, and perhaps one or two more. Apart from coloration peculiarities, the only member of the duiker families worthy of more than a passing glance is the last named. Rowland Ward's *Sportsman's Handbook* states that the Yellow-backed Duiker, known to be the largest of that group, at times approaches in size to *that of a donkey* (class of donkey not stated). I have certainly never seen a duiker of any species, either in Liberia or anywhere else, which approached a donkey of even the smallest size, to say nothing of the mule-like Egyptian variety. Johnston says that this animal attains to the dimensions of a very large sheep or a very small cow. Here again we are left with the



vaguest possible basis of comparison. The only specimens seen by me were a little larger—a very little larger—than a common Grimm's Duiker, and I think we may very well leave it at that.

The Bush-buck is not numerous, but may be found on the edge of the forest here and there. I am unable to detect any difference between the Liberian type and those I have known on the other side of the continent. The same dark, greyish brown, and yellowish chestnut in the male and female respectively; the same bold white stripes and spots upon the flanks and haunches, and the same shapely horns, somewhat less impressive in point of length, I think, than those of Zambezia.

A singular little creature found in Liberia is the Water Chevrotain, which must have come as a boon and a blessing to scientists if one may judge by the reams of nonsense which have been written about it from its "Selenodont teeth" to its "Generalized placenta." It is a small animal with hooved feet, a rather thick brown coat spotted with white, and no horns. It seems to have about the same habits as those of the common Hippopotamus, feeding by night, and remaining emersed in water during the day. It is said to be inordinately fond of the roots of the common blue water-lily, upon which it is believed by the natives to maintain itself in the wild state almost exclusively. The female produces but one at a birth, the small creature taking to the water, under the maternal guidance, at once. How they avoid extermination at the teeth of the crocodiles, from which no piece of water which I have seen in Liberia can be regarded as free, is one of Nature's mysteries of which there appears to be no immediate prospect of a solution.

No zebras have as yet been reported. I have, however, possessed, during the greater part of my residence in Liberia, a rug made from the skin of a Burchell's Zebra shot by me several years ago in Shupanga Forest on the lower course of the Zambezi. This skin has awakened great interest in several of my native servants and others, who have assured me that animals similarly marked were to be found in a country many days'

journey to the northward : I conclude the open country beyond the forest.

I have not heard that among the pigs of Liberia, the widely distributed, hideous Warthog occurs ; nor need his absence occasion much regret, since the handsome, toothsome, Red River Hog is extremely numerous throughout the country. It is a great pity that this fine animal, which becomes very tame in captivity, is not made more of, not only in Liberia, but in all other portions of Africa where his several closely resembling varieties are to be found. A very large black pig, which may be some near relation of the Giant Hog, discovered in Eastern Equatorial Africa in, I think, 1908 by Captain Meinertzhagen, is reported by the natives, these two being the only pigs to which, in Liberia, our knowledge extends. The large black animals are dwellers in the thickest jungle ; their rooting habits being the same as those of other members of their family. They have a habit of forming much-frequented, dark, tunnel-like runs into which, on being disturbed, they immediately disappear. They are very constant in their attachment to certain areas of forest, where their muddy wallows, of great size, are distinctly features to be avoided. But, from what one can gather, they are very difficult indeed to catch a glimpse of, due chiefly to the darkness, to their colour, and to the celerity with which, on being disturbed, they scuttle away down their gloomy labyrinth of runs. With all this information regarding this great pig, which any native, especially those from Gola country, is familiar with, it seems a great pity that no specimen has yet been obtained.

Although it comes out of its place, I must not neglect to mention a very tiny fascinating little beast which has come to be called, somewhat oddly in a Republican country, the Royal Antelope, and which occurs rather sparsely in the forest country. It has been described as the smallest of all the horned ruminants, being only nine or ten inches high ; but I am by no means sure that a tiny antelope which I saw some years ago in the possession of a Portuguese half-

caste at Sofala, who steadfastly and exasperatingly refused all the tempting offers I made him for it, was not still smaller. Whereas the Royal Antelope is described as being of the height mentioned, the little Sofala animal, although possessing horns and obviously full-grown, could not have measured more than six inches high, the slender lower limbs being no thicker than a thin black-lead pencil. The Royal Antelope is, nevertheless, a particularly attractive little creature, of dark chestnut paling to pure white on the belly and the insides of the thighs; the horns are about an inch long, and are almost straight, but I have been unable to ascertain whether both sexes carry them.

Monkeys are very numerous, and consist of the differing members of a number of families, none of which, I think, are peculiar to the country. It is quite possible, of course, that others remain to be noted, for it would be unreasonable to suppose for one moment that, in such thick concealment as Liberia provides them with, the "Monkey-people," as they are so picturesquely called in India, have all been identified. Their cover is thick enough, for years to come, to conceal many families of which we still know nothing—in fact I consider it by no means certain that one or other of the great man-like apes may not, sooner or later, be reported in the country. Although it is probable that we should have already heard of him from the natives had he appeared elsewhere, I nevertheless see no reason why the Gorilla, for instance, should possess a habitat confined, as though in a ring-fence, within the limits of the Cameroons and the Gaboon. In those divisions this terrible form is known to exist, but it is by no means impossible that he, or something more or less like him, should be unsuspectingly haunting the dense, gloomy jungle of one or more of the divisions of the western projection of Africa as well.

But passing from the possible to the known varieties, perhaps the most fascinating and astonishing of all is the quaint, semi-human Chimpanzee. I do not know whether the great Darwin ever had the advantage of

studying the surprising attainments of a well-trained "Chimp," as they are called throughout West Africa; if so, he must have been rarely sustained and encouraged in his epoch-making work. The Liberian Chimpanzee, whilst found practically all over the country at a certain distance from the coast, is said to be especially numerous in the interior of the Maryland and Sinoe Counties. They are about four feet, or perhaps sometimes a little more, in height, and of a rather dingy, reddish-brown with quite a noticeable beard. The face is pale and wrinkled, with large protruding lips. Of their habits and mode of life in the wild state, but little appears to be known. I have, however, ascertained that they are much less arboreal than are the majority of the monkey families found here, resembling in this respect the Chacma or the Yellow Baboon, the greater part of whose existence is passed upon the ground. They do not seem, moreover, to consort together in large, dangerous, and destructive bands as do the baboons, small groups only being reported. They never remain long in one place; their lives being spent in a never-ending, unnecessary ramble which is by no means attributable to the anxieties and preoccupations attendant upon their food supply, which is to all intents and purposes unlimited, and consists of roots, bark, and certain fruits and seeds. They simply wander through the forests from year's end to year's end, usually concealed in the thick undergrowth through which the family party makes its leisurely way. At times, moved thereto by causes whereof we shall remain ignorant until we become better acquainted, Chimpanzees startle the woodland by the utterance of loud shouts, and weird, semi-human yells, as of men and women calling despairingly for succour; they are also persistently reported to meet together at intervals in considerable numbers, when they pass lengthy periods in drumming with their hands and feet more or less rythmically upon logs of wood—most probably fallen tree-trunks—and yelling in discordant chorus. I have always thought that this amazing habit, of which there is strong and

consistent evidence, brings the Chimpanzee nearer to humanity than any other trait in his singularly human character. The young of this variety are born entirely hairless, and, caught young and domesticated, there seems to be little, if we except the power of speech, that the intelligence of this extraordinary creature is incapable of assimilating. He is so intensely affectionate, and seems so quickly to recognize his and his captor's common origin, that he seldom fails to make friends without loss of time. He appears, in many cases, to make great distinctions between the European and the African, to the latter of whom he takes, I learn, a much longer time in becoming reconciled. But to the former he usually turns at once, and, in quite a short time, will display an amount of attachment to him as charming as it is bewildering. Often, after an interval of only a few weeks, Chimpanzees can be taught to sit at table, to eat their food with a fork or spoon, drink out of a cup, and acquire table manners of surprising correctness. They are confidently stated to be able to convey definite meaning to each other by oral means, and there is no doubt that they can be moved to the equivalent of laughter and tears, since, should they be corrected for a fault, they cry bitterly, and present a woe-begone appearance of the utmost misery. On their master's return to the house after an absence of even short duration, they will leap into his arms with the most extravagant manifestations of joy, and in many other ways display an emotion and a power of discrimination as astonishing as it is touching. In Europe they appear to be susceptible to the diseases incidental to our inclement climate, but I am informed by Dr. Steegmann that, by judiciously and gradually eliminating the detail of fruit from their diet, and substituting therefore heat-producing agencies, such as meal, bread, etc., he has kept chimpanzees in England for years, one becoming so hardened to the climate that it passed no less than three winters in his grounds practically without shelter.

Baboons of a variety which seems similar to that of

the Chacma, though perhaps slightly smaller, are reported from the interior by an English observer who has passed some time in Liberia. I understood him to say that they frequent in large numbers the mountainous country to the east of Grand Bassa County. Personally, I have seen none, even in captivity.

Putting aside the two species dealt with—or rather the *one*, for, properly speaking, the Chimpanzee is not a monkey at all, but an anthropoid ape—there may remain in Liberia ten or twelve monkeys of various kinds, some of which are of great interest and attractiveness. Foremost among these comes the extraordinarily handsome animal which the Liberians call “Dandy Jack.” Sir H. H. Johnston calls him the “Bay-thighed Monkey,” and describes him as being of a bright chestnut-red, almost flame-coloured, on the inside of the thigh. I have never seen one whose coloration could be so described; the usual hue at those points being rather a dingy yellow. For all that, however, with his white breast and beard, this monkey is a very striking type, and grows extremely tame in captivity.

The Sooty Mangabey is very numerous all over the country, and is perhaps more frequently seen confined in Liberian back premises than any other species. A white-nosed monkey of somewhat pronounced coloration is apparently a very large, ape-like animal of reddish-brown with white throat and chest. He is a bold thief, and, in bands of six or eight, raids gardens and plantations in the most impudent manner. Not very long ago, a row of pine-apples in the gardens of the Consulate-General at Monrovia was devastated at two o'clock in the afternoon by a sudden descent of half a dozen of these creatures, one of which, at any rate, retired with a moderate allowance of No. 6 shot in his skin. They are handsome beasts, and are further distinguished, if I remember correctly, by liberal markings of black on head, arms, legs, and tail.

Another rather brilliantly-coloured type is the so-called Green Monkey, who also possesses dirty white

whiskers. He is, I think, scarcely green; possessing a mixture of orange and dark brown hair which, with the aid of some force of imagination, might be called green, but very doubtfully. On the western borders of the Liberian Republic there is a black and white Colobus Monkey, distinguished by the same beautiful, long, silky coat which commands such a high price in the bazaars of the East Coast. The comparatively large body of this conspicuous animal is covered by lustrous black hair, with the exception of the collar, mane, and tail, which are snowy-white. I once saw a carriage rug made of a number of these skins skilfully joined together so that the markings met, and I am of opinion that it formed the most beautiful and striking article for the purpose I have ever seen.

An insectivorous Lemur, covered with the usual thick chinchilla-like fur, is not uncommon. I see very little to distinguish it from the South African "Bush baby." Johnston says, referring to these animals: "A peculiarity of the Lemurs, distinguishing them sharply from the true monkeys and the remote ancestors of man, is the incisiform character of the lower canine teeth." The discovery of this peculiarity was, I consider, most opportune. I cannot imagine a more painful or revolting idea than that we should ever be threatened by proof of early alliance with the family of the Lemurs!

There are many squirrels—probably five or six different kinds, one of which, of pale red, is very common, whilst the rats and mice possess no special features which are not characteristic of the rodents of other portions of Africa upon which I have written. Two porcupines are also present, the ordinary form described in my book *Wild Game in Zambesia*, and another called the Brush-tailed Porcupine, whose quills in no way compare with those of the first-named either in length or numbers. The latter type presents rather a miserable appearance, and conveys the impression of some creature midway between a rat and some despondent aberrant form of hedge-hog. A Tree Hyrax is reported from the interior.

There are two or more scaly ant-eaters, which perform valuable service in destroying the termites, drivers, and other species of ant. One of these, the Long-tailed Ant-eater, has developed a caudal appendage which appears to be quite disproportionate to its length of eighteen inches or so. These creatures are covered with horny scales, and, on the approach of danger or alarm, roll themselves up, remaining quite motionless until satisfied that it has passed them by.

Finally, there are many bats, both insect- and fruit-eating; one of these being quite enormous, and reminding one of the great, so-called "Bell-bat" of Natal. I have also observed occasionally a small, white-winged, apparently insectivorous form which frequents the stunted vegetation of the sea-shore rather than that of the edges of the forest.



## CHAPTER IX

### FAUNA (*continued*): BIRDS, REPTILES, INSECTS

IT is a curious fact that the bird-life of Liberia should be, I will not say scarce or scanty, but so unobtrusive. A person unpossessed of fairly well developed powers of observation might visit this country, remain in it for quite an appreciable time, and after his departure endeavour almost in vain to recall to his recollection any souvenirs of Liberian ornithology whatsoever. There can be no doubt, therefore, that in comparison with the teeming bird populations of other parts of Africa, the birds of the Republic are not remarkable for either numbers, variety, or anything else. I do not propose to give in this chapter anything like a complete description of them—that is a task which would be far beyond my powers, or the patience of the general reader for whom these pages are penned—but I think room may be found for an account of some of the more prominent varieties, since it is desired, within reasonable limits, to make this book as complete as possible.

Eagles, kites, hawks, and other raptorial birds are by no means common. Indeed, after a residence of several years in the country, I only remember to have seen singularly few, and but two vultures ; but of the first-named the handsomest, most attractive, and perhaps the largest is the cheery, vociferous Fishing Eagle. This fine bird, standing well over three feet in height, is found near the sea or on the estuaries and lower courses of the more important rivers, where its wild, mirthful cries resound as it wheels, a mere speck, in the blue African sky. The

Fishing Eagle is of slaty-black plumage, with snowy white collar and "shirt-front," and rich, chocolate-brown wing-covers. The beak and talons are yellow. Although sometimes called the "Sea Eagle," this splendid member of the *raptores* does not by any means live altogether on fish ; it is an offal-eater, consorting, where they occur, with vultures, marabou storks, and other cleaners up of the over-ripe carcass. In confinement they will subsist on live fowls, rats, or any other small living creatures which may be placed in the eagle-house. I have found no trace in Liberia of their near relation the immense, powerful Lammergeyer, which often reaches a wing-spread of over six feet.

The West African Fishing Vulture may also be seen near the sea-coast, a very large specimen having been shot recently by a British visitor on the St. Paul River. This is another large black and white bird, whose plumage, unlike that of the species just referred to, shows little or no trace of chocolate or other shade of brown after reaching maturity. These vultures seem to me to subsist more consistently upon fish and other marine food than does the Fishing Eagle ; they are very frequently seen watching the water to spy the presence of a shoal of fish near the surface, when, at a prodigious speed and with wings close-reefed, they hurl themselves through the air at a prodigious speed, checking themselves with outstretched wings and talons as they reach the surface to seize any unlucky fish which may not have been quick enough to dive in time.

In the interior of the country, I am informed, several very interesting eagles occur, especially in districts where forest begins to give way to plain, among these being the Crowned Eagle, the tailless Bateleur, and a form which, as described to me, seemed extremely like the well-known Tawny Eagle. The first named of these three is a magnificent bird, with a wing-span often exceeding seventy inches. The colour scheme is dull black, and darkest, almost black-brown, the bird's appearance being greatly enhanced by the head-plume of thick, dusky feathers. Beak and talons, as in the

case of most eagles, are yellow, the latter being of great size and immense power. The tailless Bateleur Eagle, which is coloured golden brown, black at wing and tail extremities, and blue-grey on breast and throat, is another very large type of exceedingly wide distribution, which may be seen soaring high above all things throughout the African day, and can always be distinguished from other wheeling birds of prey by the circumstance that, possessing the shortest possible tail, the appearance presented in the air is that of a crescent-moon-shaped kite. The Bateleur describes immense, slow circles, almost motionless save for his habit of apparently leaning his weight first on one wing and then on the other ; apart from this, not the smallest tremor can be perceived as, from great altitudes, he scans the surface of the earth in search of carrion. This bird rarely if ever kills, but lives almost exclusively by the enterprise of others, varying his diet occasionally upon snakes, to which they are believed to be much addicted. The Tawny Eagle may or may not be found in Liberia. A large bird, described to me by a fellow-countryman greatly interested in natural history, was stated to be coloured brown above, yellowish-chestnut beneath, and to possess yellow legs feathered to the feet. This description seemed to me to admit of but small probability of error ; moreover, the bird was shot whilst making a meal of a large snake, of which the Tawny Eagle is known to be inordinately fond. Whilst, no doubt, all the larger *raptores* are great snake destroyers, some there are, like the one we are considering, whose diet consists for the greater part of reptiles of almost all kinds—even the poisonous varieties having but little opportunity of employing their venom against the thick shield of armour-like wing feathers imposed outstretched to receive the lightning dart of the deadly fangs.

The nests of all these eagles are very similar in appearance, consisting of a rough platform of large sticks built high up in a tree. There are one or two types, it is true, which are understood to hatch out

their young on the ledges of inaccessible mountain peaks ; but none of these, so far as I am aware, have been reported from the interior of Liberia.

The only Kite which I have seen in no way resembles the yellow-billed Egyptian Kite common elsewhere in Africa. The bird of this family found in Liberia, a specimen of which was shot by me whilst trying to commit depredations upon my chickens, did not possess either a yellow beak or legs. These were of dull, brownish-grey, the back and breast being also of dull brown, a colour even extending to the tail, which was faintly barred with a still darker shade of brown. There was no trace of the bright colouring on wings, back, and breast which is so distinguishing a characteristic of the so-called Egyptian variety—in fact, nothing more sombre could be well imagined. These birds are apparently migratory, and not at any time numerous. I regret that the specimen shot by me was spoiled in the process of curing. Kites are great carrion eaters, with a decided and most irregular affection for very young chickens, upon which they swoop in a graceful if destructive manner. It is very entertaining to watch them upon the arrival of a swarm of locusts. These they catch in their talons and devour in full flight, rending the fat, juicy insects to pieces, and scattering the discarded portions as they wheel round to renew the attack. They are great frequenters of harbours, their more dusky plumage contrasting with the blue-white of the seagulls as both wheel about the vessels at anchor, looking for choice morsels from the scullery-shoots, which they secure from the water in their talons and devour on the wing as described.

I am quite unable to give any trustworthy or detailed description of the vultures seen by me ; but, so far as I was able to determine, they were similar in size to the common Griffon Vulture, although much darker, and with no trace of the greyish breast and loathsome, naked head of the well-known species mentioned. There must, of course, be more than one vulture in or upon the outskirts of Liberia, but with the exception of those

seen by me, I have been unable to obtain any reliable particulars relating to such others as may exist.

Several small hawks are seen on the edge of the forest ; one, a handsome little bird which I took to be one of the sparrow-hawks, came very near to me on one occasion, and I have seen other members of the same species. Its prevailing colour was grey, deepening upon the back and wings, and it seemed to possess a curiously flattened, dark brown head. The tail appeared to be disproportionately long. There is, I understand, a type of hawk here which is said to gain a livelihood by pursuing bats. This will probably eventually be found to be one of the goat-suckers, of which I have seen two or three varieties, the ubiquitous Foss's bird among them. These, needless to say, do not subsist upon bats, but upon insects. It is somewhat disconcerting at times, in the dusk of the evening, to have one of these ghostly creatures rise noiselessly from the ground at your very feet and flit away spectre-like ahead, only to alight and, fifty yards farther on, play upon you the same senseless practical joke again. I have not seen in this country the curious form of goat-sucker common to certain portions of South Central Africa, and distinguished by a singular prolongation of one of the pinion feathers of each wing, causing them to present, in flight, the appearance of having two pieces of tape about a foot long fluttering behind them.

Crows are not numerous, the only variety of which I am aware being the white-throated, so-called scapulated, bird common all Africa over.

Among shore-birds, which are extraordinarily sparsely distributed, mention may be made of the Spur-winged and one other, probably the Nob-nosed Goose, and one or two ducks, of which the excellent-eating umber and dark-brown barred Whistling Duck is not uncommon. Great ash-grey herons, green herons, and one or two others, together with the great white egret, rise from the rushes which border the streams, and flap lazily away as you approach their feeding grounds, whilst curlews, May-birds, and sand-pipers may be

seen very sparingly upon the sea-shore and in the estuaries, where they fraternize with spur-winged plovers, water dikkops, an occasional ibis, or, very rarely, flamingoes.

There are two guinea-fowls, one an essentially West African bird of great beauty which should, in my opinion, be introduced into Europe, if this has not already been done. The plumage of this form is very striking, and consists of an almost metallic bluish-grey, the breast and neck being snow-white, whilst the head is featherless and covered with a reddish skin. These guinea-fowls are not very numerous in Liberia; they are certainly not found in the immense flocks in which their commoner relatives of South-East Africa may happily be encountered. But although, by reason of its very unusual marking, the species just described may be regarded as the more attractive of the two kinds found here, the larger grey, black-crested guinea-fowl is also an extremely handsome type, with its extraordinarily steely-bright plumage, white wing feathers, and general dark coloration. The smart little black plume which it bears rather reminds one in shape of the old helmets worn by the Life Guards in the early part of the nineteenth century.

I regard guinea-fowls and partridges as among the most God-given birds with which Africa, or any other country containing them for the matter of that, has been endowed. Their flesh is so delicate, so well-flavoured, so dainty. I do not think that the most ungrateful or the most careless could send away the débris of a dish of roasted guinea-fowl without experiencing, however dimly, that whole-hearted satisfaction which almost amounts to unconscious thanksgiving. I know I have felt it often enough, after a prolonged régime of tough buffalo or antelope meat, or, worse still, tinned provisions!

Only one francolin has been seen by me in Liberia. This was a most delightful creature, whose loud, unmistakable but indescribable cry for some time awoke one each morning, as he expressed a decided opinion that

it was quite time to be up. Several times my native servants urged me to shoot him, drawing alluring descriptions of his excellence made up into "palm-oil chop," but I turned a deaf ear to them, hoping the bird would grow to feel safe with us—a wish unfortunately unrealized. This Francolin was one of the crested varieties, and the colour scheme, seen through powerful glasses, seemed to me to be reddish-brown, with pale buff on the breast. I learn that there are one or two more francolins in the country, but have never seen the remaining species either dead or alive. I do not think that those very desirable game birds erroneously called "African Pheasants," but in reality partridges not unlike but smaller than the English bird, occur in Liberia.

The pretty dove families are not very well represented. The common Turtledove is found near the coast, but does not seem to be so numerous as in possibly dryer parts of the continent. Their plaintive crooning call echoes night and morning from the forest, and they are seen flying fairly high over the tree-tops in the late afternoon. About old gardens and near the rice-fields they are, of course, more numerous, but one sees most, near the sea, of the smaller fruit-eating Pigeon which, coloured golden bronze, green, and further ornamented with black wing-feathers edged with yellow, is perhaps more striking than the others in spite of his diminutive size. I have not seen or heard of any of the larger pigeons, some quite as big as our home-bred stock-dove, which the forest lands of other divisions of Africa contain ; but these may not yet have been observed in Liberia.

One hears of what appears to be an undoubted bustard, which is found in the interior of the Montserrado County, as doubtless elsewhere. This, from the description given, would seem to be a bird strikingly similar to, if not identical with, the Knorhaan or Lesser Bustard. It may perhaps be some specialized variety which has adapted its mode of life to the thick bush, since the several described families of this bird prefer

grass country to forest, so far as their habits have been observed. Of course, the bush-country Bustard *par excellence* is that known as the Red-crested Bustard, but of the presence of this form we have no evidence.

Rollers are very common, and all of strikingly gay plumage. The Lilac-breasted Roller is very frequently seen, even near Monrovia, and is readily identifiable by its bright blue wing feathers, and singular flight. There are also one or two more varieties of this handsome bird, which should be sedulously protected for the havoc they cause among locusts, grasshoppers, and other insect pests. Unhappily many are shot for their gay plumage, a fate all too common to African birds of striking appearance.

One of the Liberian postage stamps, which invariably rivets attention, is the ten-cent value, representing a by no means inaccurately or inartistically portrayed White-crested Hornbill. There are in the country, in addition to this curious bird, several other members of the same extraordinary family. The White-crested Hornbill is a bird about the size of an ordinary crow. His long, brownish-black, fan-like tail is attractively tipped with white. The body is sombrely coloured, its only relief being a curious greyish-white plume of what at first appear to be bristles rather than feathers. The grey-black beak, very massive at the base, curves somewhat towards the point, giving the bird, if such a thing were conceivable, a pronounced semitic appearance. There are two or three other varieties in the country, namely the Black and the so-called Elate Hornbill. With regard to the latter, no more extraordinary misnomer could possibly have been conferred upon any living creature, since he is the very embodiment of profound dejection. Weighed down, as it would seem, by a monstrous beak which appears to spring from the very centre of the crown of his head, and attired in a Stiggins-like suit of rusty black, the mournfulness of which a few frivolous speckles upon the throat rather accentuate than otherwise, and with his head covered with a shock of untidy feathers, he gives one the im-



pression of spending his days in ruminating bitterly upon the hopelessness of his lot, and the dreariness of his personal appearance. I have looked in vain for a recurrence in Liberia of my old East African friend the Ground Hornbill, described in my book *Portuguese East Africa*, but have found no trace of him.

The only parrot I have seen is the small Love Bird, common all Africa over. The Grey Parrot, the well-known talker seen in the pictures of returning sailors and other wanderers, does not seem to stray so far to the westward from his home in the far eastern portion of the Gulf of Guinea. The little Love Bird, however, is a fascinating type which, if caught young enough, becomes surprisingly tame, but I have never heard of any well-authenticated case in which he had succeeded in mastering any language but his own, which is very far from being an alluring one.

There are many king-fishers, some of which, namely the small crested variety and two more, are old friends of mine. They are lovely, jewel-like creatures, green, vivid blue and cinnamon, with chrome yellow beaks. The larger varieties extend to the Great Kingfisher, a long-beaked bird as large as a small pigeon, of bluish-purple speckled with white, and there is also the greyer Halcyon. My experience of these birds has been one long disappointment to me. I feel sure I could number by the hundred the occasions upon which I have seen them poise themselves above the water, fold their wings, and plunge headlong beneath the surface; but hardly ever have I seen them emerge with the struggling silvery body wriggling in their beaks for which I have so eagerly looked. They seem almost always to make a mess of it, and fly sulkily up to some overhanging bush with the air of secretly hoping that nobody was there to see them do it.

Owls are very sparsely represented. The Giant Eagle Owl seems to be entirely absent, as are also the Spotted Owl, and the little Scops Owl, which latter is believed to live almost if not wholly upon insects. I have seen at evening a small brownish owl fluttering

about the trees, but have rarely heard one hoot since I have been in the country.

Turning to the smaller orders, the visitor's curiosity will very soon be aroused by the singular appearance of many of the palms, coco-nut, oil, and others which display, suspended from their fronds, scores of beautifully woven nests of colonies of weaver birds. Once thus occupied, the palms soon assume a neglected, wilted appearance, the fronds being rapidly stripped of their fibrous greenery which is employed in the construction of the tiny abodes. These weaver birds are, of course, closely allied to the finches, and are extremely cheery little creatures. They chatter from morning to night, and usually fly in small companies of a score or more, their bright yellow or yellow and black plumage looking very gay. Liberians call them "Rice-birds," and there are, in addition, several finch-like birds whose names I do not know.

But among the most exquisite of the dwellers of the Liberian flowering bushes, are the wonderful polychromatic, jewel-like sun-birds, the bewilderingly beautiful iridescent sheen of whose apparently metallic plumage glistens brilliantly in the sun as they poise themselves in the early morning, like large humming-birds, over the open cup of some dew-bespangled flower. Of these I have seen fully half a dozen different species, each more lovely than the last, such as—or similar to—the Malachite, the Coppery, the Scarlet-breasted, and Bradshaw's Sunbird. These are all so perfectly gorgeous that no description in words could possibly do adequate justice to them. Another very brightly plumaged bird is a Bee-eater, which I identified as such by means of his two prolonged central tail feathers. This was certainly not the Carmine-throated Bee-eater, as that portion of his anatomy was of bright, metallic blue-green. I have not yet seen any representatives of the Ox-pickers, nor, indeed, any starlings at all. It is said that the beautiful blue-black Glossy Starling occurs in the interior.

Swallows and swifts are very numerous. The former

establish themselves in large colonies, and build immense clusters of mud nests under the eaves of churches and other suitable projections. I have not succeeded in identifying this bird, which does not seem to migrate at all; but the small Stripe-breasted Swallow is constantly seen, together with a wire-tailed bird, which I fancy is a migrant. There is one sand-martin, and two different swifts.

I do not think the cuckoos are well represented. The chestnut-winged, cream-bellied, black-headed *Centropus* Cuckoo is not uncommon, a pair having nested in the bush just outside the grounds of the Consulate-General. I have also seen Klaas' Cuckoo, and I think the Didric, or a form strikingly similar to it. But the unmistakable sweet bell-like call of the *Centropus* is so characteristic of tropical Africa, that I really do not know what we should do without him.

There are many singing birds, and one, an unmistakable thrush, has a song which scarcely differs from the home variety. In the early morning, at certain times of the year, the air resounds with the songs of the warblers, the faint, sweet music of the wax-bills and siskins, and the quaint, not unpleasant chirp of a bulbul more soberly dressed than others of his African relatives, but just as cheery and irrepressible. Of the wax-bills, some of these pretty little creatures are extraordinarily small, and when caught and caged, appear quite unconcerned by their untoward fate, eating and drinking greedily from the first moment of their incarceration, although they seldom live very long. Then there are one or more families of buntings, and a curious pied wag-tail, which may be seen all over the country. Wood-peckers may often be heard from the forest, and a small creeper, I think one or other of the colies, runs up the bark of the tree-trunks, looking for all the world like a mouse as he clings to its rough irregularities.

I have been perforce compelled, through lack of space, to omit or neglect other birds of great interest to the ornithologist which we know or believe to exist

in Liberia ; but it will have been apparent to the casual reader that this branch of natural history is one which would provide material for wide study, and well repay careful investigation. Although they are so unobtrusive, and far from thrusting themselves upon one, there can be no doubt that this little-known forest country is the home of, it may be, many unsuspected varieties whose names will one day, I feel sure, greatly enrich existing lists of African birds.

Liberia possesses numerous reptiles ; the conditions of the climate and the geographical position being no doubt largely responsible for the great numbers of these creatures which occur within the borders of the Republic. I suppose, as in the case of the heated tropical atmosphere of the Valley of the Amazon, it is more favourable for the propagation and growth of these forms than drier, cooler surroundings.

I fancy the largest of the reptiles found must be the Slender-snouted Crocodile. This frequents most of the larger rivers, but should not, of course, be confused with the Gavial, which does not equal it in size, and presents many marked differences, notably the possession of the curious, button-shaped protuberance on the end of the nose which the Liberian fish-eater does not display. Slender-snouted Crocodiles appear to attain to very large size, one shot in the St. John River being stated to have reached a length of nearly eighteen feet, and to be enormously thick in the body. In proportion to their measurement, and compared with the common Nilotic flesh-eater found all Africa over, the jaws of the Slender-snouted variety are very long and undoubtedly slender, but his teeth are neither so long, so numerous, nor so formidable. But little difference of colour is perceptible between this and the Nilotic type, but the skin of the throat and belly of the former is harder, and appears to transform itself into horn-like plates, the advantage of which is not too apparent. The tail serration does not seem to be very marked, nor are the claws upon the hand-like feet so developed as in the case of the other species mentioned. Another fish-

eating crocodile is that which has been described by other writers as the Short-headed variety. It is understood only to reach the comparatively inconsiderable measurement of five or six feet, and by reason of a perfectly hideous snub-nose, is perhaps the plainest member in Africa of a phenomenally hideous reptilean order. Both these species subsist exclusively on fish.

We now come to the terrible Nilotic Crocodile. This ghastly creature seems to me to be neither so common nor to grow to so great a size as those which I have seen and shot in the rivers of South-East Africa, to say nothing of the Zambezi marshes in some of which they attain to great size. I have killed during the last twenty years literally hundreds of crocodiles in various parts of Africa, regarding it as nothing short of a plain duty to destroy them down to the last cartridge which could possibly be spared for the purpose. The largest crocodile shot and actually recovered by me measured very close upon eighteen feet in length, and was over seven feet in body circumference behind the shoulders. The stomach was found to contain some partly digested water-buck meat, and the flesh of the cat-fish ; but that he was a man-eater was also proved by the presence in a litter of stones at the base of the stomach of several much eroded copper or brass-wire bangles.

My friend Major Stevenson-Hamilton, the well-known authority upon the subject of African great game, has had some very interesting experiences with these creatures, and once accompanying me upon one of my expeditions into the interior, in the course of which we crossed on foot from the coast of the Indian Ocean at Ibo to the south-eastern shores of Lake Nyasa, rather an amusing episode took place during our passage of the Lujenda River. He and I were the first to cross at a point where the stream was about one hundred yards wide, and, awaiting the arrival of our carriers, we walked a little way along the bank to the shade of a small group of trees. Presently he drew my attention (or I drew his, I forget which) to the hideous, ominous, coffin-shape of a large crocodile's head practically on a

level with the surface of the water, almost in mid-stream, and about seventy yards away. We arranged to fire together by signal on the last sound of the words "one, two, three." This we did, the rifles discharging absolutely together; but when we looked out after the shots, to our stupefaction the brute's head *was still there!* We gazed at each other aghast and peered out on to the river, rubbing our eyes in blank amazement. We felt we could not possibly have missed it. I got out my glasses and, as somewhat of a solace to our marksmanship, clearly made out the distinct "splashes" of two bullets upon the most remarkable crocodile's-head-shaped piece of rock it has ever been my lot to behold. I passed my companion the glasses, and a moment after the plodding canoe-men in charge of our baggage were startled by peals of laughter from the spot whereat we awaited them. Although Major Stevenson-Hamilton has made several allusions in his writings to our passage of the Lujenda, he has never related this incident so far as I am aware.

I have written so much descriptive of these repulsive creatures and their peculiarities in my books upon Portuguese East Africa and Zambezia, that but little remains for me now to say, with the exception, perhaps, of congratulating Liberia that her rivers are not as other African rivers regarding the numbers of their crocodiles and the danger and menace of their presence.

The great Varanus, or carnivorous Monitor Lizard, grows to great size, perhaps six feet or more. This is an extremely crocodile-like creature, and is also distinguished by the adjective Nilotic, partly, I suppose, because he was discovered on that ancient river, partly because he takes to water if possible on being disturbed, and to some extent to distinguish him from the Arboreal Varanus which is, among other peculiarities, a very much smaller creature. The Monitor possesses a rather attractive skin which, unlike the greater portion of that of the Crocodile, can be utilized, and I dare say is often made up into articles which bear its larger relative's name. The colouring of the freshly removed hide is

rather vivid, being green, yellow, and slaty black. Monitors resemble crocodiles in many of their habits ; like the latter they lay their eggs in the sand of the river-bank, and, as I have said, take readily to water, in which they can—and do—remain for long periods at a time. They are unpleasant creatures to deal with at times, and can inflict an extremely nasty bite, whilst if cornered and brought to bay, they look the very incarnation of fierceness, as they shoot out a forked, saliva-covered tongue, hissing loudly the while. These reptiles subsist chiefly, so far as the former is concerned, upon eggs, crabs, young birds, and the smaller mammals, the latter devouring large quantities of insects, snakes, and carrion. The larger variety is a great nuisance if he should succeed in discovering the whereabouts of the hen-roost, whence eggs and chickens will promptly begin to disappear at an alarming rate.

Small lizards are very numerous, some of them being brightly coloured. They are of immense service in devouring masses of disgusting insect pests, and but for the damage they inflict on tender seedlings in the flower garden, should receive protection and encouragement.

There are two or three chameleons, the commonest being perhaps the slender variety. Although no doubt these curious creatures enter considerably into the fables and folk-lore of the country, the stories concerning them are neither so ingenious nor so well-conceived as those current in the Zambezi Valley.

Two turtles are fairly common, one on the coast, and the other confining itself to fresh water. The former grows to great size, and about the month of December leaves the water, at night to deposit eggs in the sand above high-water mark. Of these, at times, clutches of about seven or eight dozens are laid which, if undiscovered by natives (a rare eventuality I should imagine), are hatched out by the sun. These eggs are almost perfectly spherical, quite white, about the size of a large greengage plum, and enclosed in a flexible, skin-like shell. One of these creatures caught near the Consulate-General at Monrovia was of great size, nearly five

feet long, and possessed very large flippers. In due time it was cooked in the form both of soup and cutlets ; but nothing less appetizing or desirable could well be imagined. It was promptly relegated to the servants' quarters, and for days—I had almost written weeks—the grounds were noisome with the odour of flesh of turtle. There can be no doubt that this creature yields a very merchantable shell, the collection of which the growing discouragement of celluloid manufacture at home might one day render a profitable occupation. The fresh-water Turtle, or more properly, Tortoise, is a small, valueless creature not more than eighteen inches over the top of its bony carapace. Land tortoises, precisely similar if somewhat larger than those hawked about the London streets, are also present in large numbers.

Among the remaining amphibians there is little to attract the attention of any but scientists, to whom this book is not specially addressed.

We now come to the snakes. I do not know how many may be found in Liberia, but I should venture to predict that this division falls in no way behind others in the numbers of its various snake families. So far as I am aware, there are at least a dozen which are either known or reputed with good reason to be poisonous, foremost among which is the Mamba.

In other portions of the great continent where I have found this snake, it was believed to occur in two varieties—the black and the green. Regarding this point opinion has always, I think, been more or less divided, some authorities maintaining that the two colours marked the difference between two distinct families. It seems now, however, that the consensus of common-sense belief points in the direction of this colour difference being more or less consequent upon age, environment, and other causes. Personally I believe that there is really no difference between them, the bright green which they present at certain periods resulting from a new skin, which gradually darkens until the next sloughing clothes the reptile anew in his



suit of green. In Liberia, the only Mambas I have seen have been green, of various shades, and from six to seven feet in length. From one of these Mrs. Maugham had a very narrow escape. We were walking through our grounds one afternoon, she a few paces ahead of me, when suddenly I saw a large Mamba coming rapidly towards us apparently to cross our front. I uttered a warning cry, and as it passed me I threw my stick to divert its attention, which I probably succeeded in doing. It passed within three feet of my wife, and I could hardly believe it possible that she had escaped it. It disappeared, however, without making any attempt to strike either of us, at a tremendous pace and with about a third of its body held above the level of the ground. There is probably no snake in the world more deadly than the Mamba, whose bite I have always understood to be the certain forerunner of speedy death. They are probably tree-snakes, subsisting largely upon small birds, squirrels, and eggs ; but during the breeding season they become very savage and aggressive should one unconsciously approach their holes, and in such circumstances they will attack fiercely and unhesitatingly, giving chase to the unlucky native or other person who may have aroused their resentment, and travelling over the ground at such a speed that escape is difficult, if not impossible.

Another very common form is the *Naja* or African Cobra, which, I am of opinion, exists in two varieties, namely the Black-necked and the *Melanoleuca*, or some form extremely like it differing certainly from the Black-necked variety. Of the first named, the coloration seems to be somewhat variable, the most usual being very dark olive-green above, but certainly not black. The throat and upper labials are extremely dark, alternating with yellow transverse bands upon the under surface of the neck. They are, however, somewhat differently coloured in *Sénégal*, where the specimens I have seen were nearly black, with very shiny scales, and displaying a white collar round the neck. They were also destitute of the yellow bands below the



A KRU HUNTER.



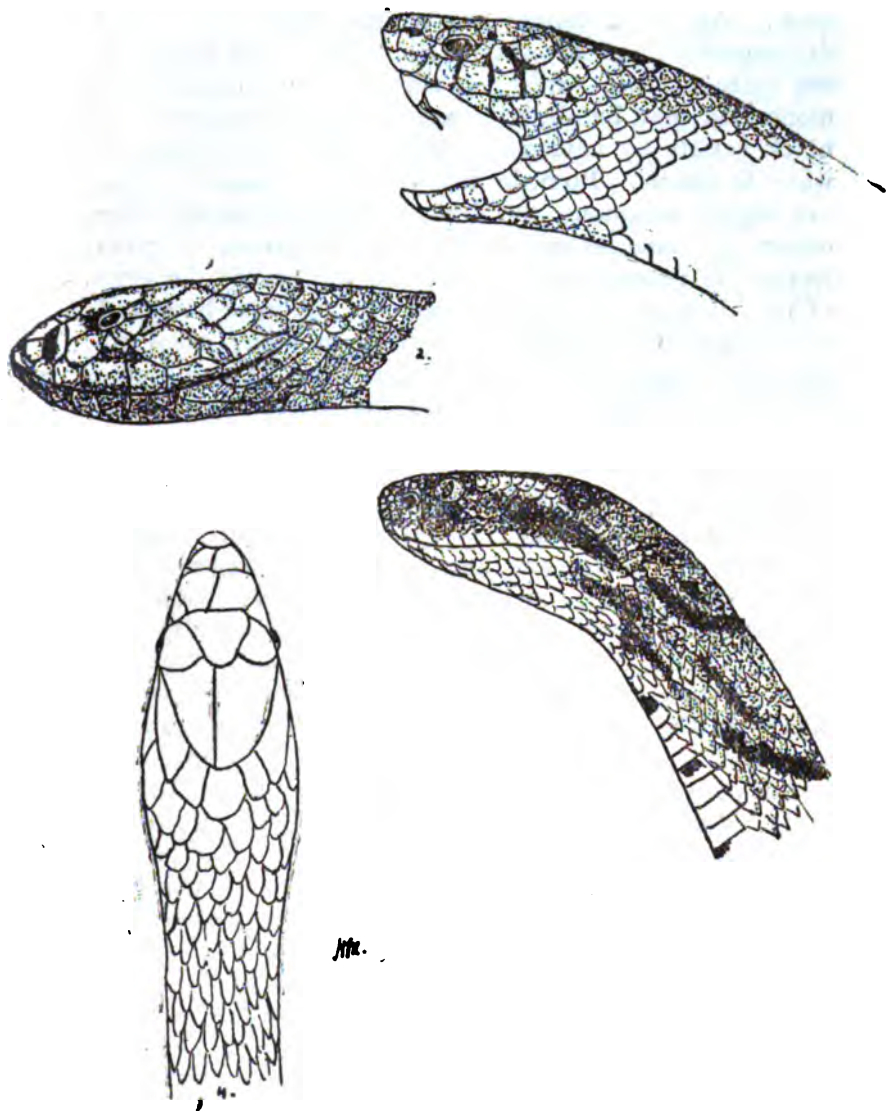
A MANDINGO MAIDEN.



NATIVE COTTON SPINNING.



**VAI WOMEN.**



1. A Viper.
2. Black-necked Cobra.
3. Puff-adder.
4. Green Mamba.

neck. All these cobras are of the distinct colubrine or serpent-like order, and reach a length of nearly if not quite six feet, whilst the second type which I have mentioned may be slightly longer, and differs from the black variety by having the sides of the head yellowish white in colour. Both, in fact all three, of these snakes are highly poisonous, the first named—and perhaps the others to some extent—possessing the power of projecting its venom, usually directing it towards the eyes of its adversary, in which it sets up an immediate and unbearable inflammation, succeeded in many cases by complete temporary loss of sight, a clot of blood forming over the cornea. It is said that Cleopatra's snake belonged to this family, and the opinion is also expressed in well-informed circles that the reptile with which Moses performed his clever entertainment before the Pharaoh—a trick still executed by the Egyptian snake-charmers of to-day—was also one of the najas. The Black-necked Cobra, as also probably the Melanoleuca, possesses the power to flatten its neck horizontally and expand a hood, as does also the White-necked Sénégalaise type. When preparing to strike, it raises and bends backward the fore part of the body, with a threatening hiss, until it almost reclines on the back of its head, the mouth wide open the while. Should the object be within range, it then hurls itself forward with lightning speed, strikes, and recovers itself for a second blow. The poison gland forms part of the salivary gland of the upper jaw, the venom running through a groove in the poison-fang along which, by muscular pressure, it is projected at the moment of striking. Najas are inordinately fond of rats, and in pursuit of these rodents will often make their way into dwelling-houses, where they take up their abode in the roof, if it be of thatch or provided with a ceiling, or in the kitchen. They are also great chicken thieves. For these reasons the lot of the cook and his assistants is not wholly free from excitement, and sometimes from real danger.

Of vipers Liberia has a large sufficiency, some growing to a length of between four and five feet. Two or

more of these, as in the case of the Horned Puff Adder, bring forth their young alive ; others again hatch them out. In the vipers, the upper jaw is very short, can be more or less erected so that the fatal puncture is a perfectly horizontal blow, and contains the very large poison fangs through which runs the main canal. In the Causus Viper, as also in the Atractaspis, the venom gland and duct are very large, the head being joined to the body by a very perceptible neck, the colour scheme being, as a whole, bluish-green above, with rows of black, chevron-shaped markings along the middle of the back. The last family mentioned belongs to the varieties of the burrowing snakes.

The Puff Adder is a somewhat slow-moving, plethoric species, and is decked out in colours of pale brown above, relieved along his back with V-shaped brownish bars, and not inharmonious black and yellow markings. On the belly the colour is yellowish-white. This reptile is really a dweller in open, or moderately open, country, Natal having at one time a great and undesirable reputation for the immense numbers of Puff Adders which infested its rolling grass lands. Its occurrence, therefore, in so densely wooded a country as Liberia is somewhat surprising. For its length, this creature is somewhat thick and bulky, and extraordinarily lethargic, although it can deliver a lightning-like stroke which, if dangerous, is not necessarily fatal. They have an unpleasant habit of cultivating human society in the cold weather, and may sometimes be found in the early morning under the tent-curtain, or even under the bed. Another Liberian Puff Adder, under strong excitement, can erect two small protuberances upon its head, which have gained for it the name of the Rhinoceros Snake. These creatures in a wild state subsist upon frogs, mice, and other small mammals. For those, however, to whom their nearer acquaintance appeals, they become very tame. As an example of this, an old friend of mine, an enthusiastic naturalist, possessed at his station on Lake Nyasa a very fine Puff Adder which, I believe, was wont to feed out of his hand. On proceeding on leave



of absence on one occasion, I well remember, his successor in the appointment which he held received his request to look after his unusual pet in terms which were as unmistakable as they were unprintable!

A very large Python is fairly numerous, specimens of which are said to have been secured nearly thirty feet in length. These huge snakes are, of course, not poisonous, killing their prey by pressure exerted by their tremendously powerful muscular bodies, which they coil round the victim in a series of rings, literally squeezing the breath out of it. I have been informed that the act of enfolding the captive beast or bird is performed with the speed of lightning, the process of crushing it being, on the contrary, very slow. After swallowing its prey, which it invariably does head first, the Python must remain completely helpless for a long time, during which occasionally the most terrible fates befall it. It is said in Liberia—not by me—that before these great constrictors set themselves to look for a meal, which they only do about once in six months or so, they quarter the country for miles round to satisfy themselves that it is free from any of the armies of the terrible Driver Ant, to which I shall refer presently. Should a Python, in his gorged, immovable condition, be encountered by the Drivers, his end is too hideous and terrible for contemplation. In this condition of lethargy they are often found and killed by the natives, by whom their flesh is greedily eaten. They are just as much at home in the water as they are on dry land, probably more so, for whereas I have seen one swimming strongly and well in the Zambezi some years ago, their progress on land is painfully slow, probably rarely reaching a speed of more than three miles an hour. I have only heard of one instance of a Python attacking a human being, and this was the case of a very small child, which the reptile found little difficulty in swallowing.

The remaining snakes of Liberia, if numerous, do not possess anything in the way of special interest. There is no species, so far as I am aware, peculiar to the

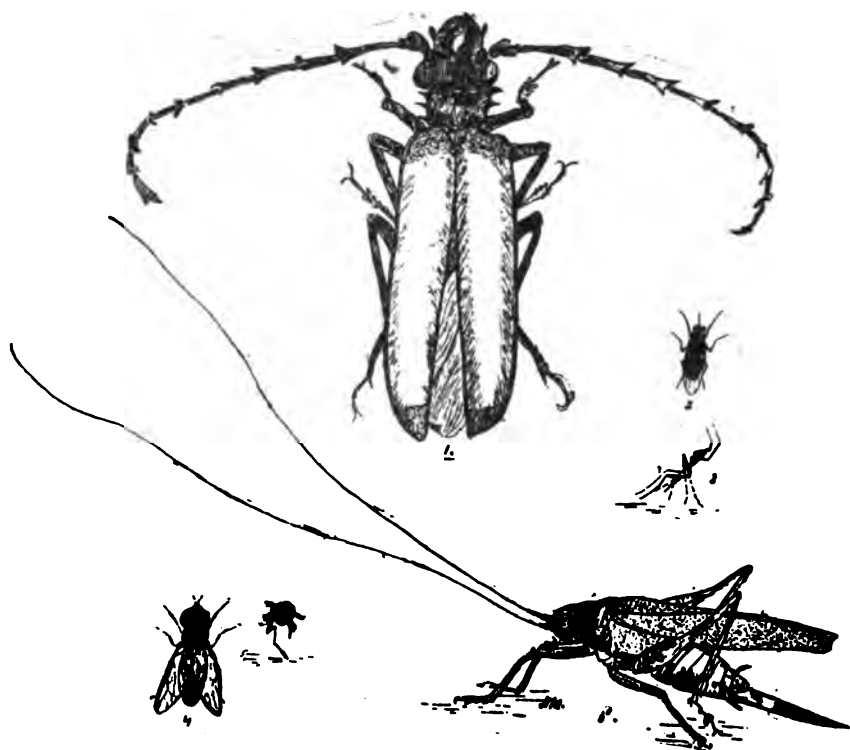
country, although probability lies on the side of new discoveries being made. As I have repeatedly stated, it is a country which might contain almost anything.

I approach the wide subject of the insect life of the country with a profound and doubtless salutary sense of my limitations. I feel most deeply that this is a task demanding powers which I fear I do not possess in a sufficiently highly developed form. In a word, I feel myself unable to render justice to all that there is of horror and despair surrounding and underlying this dreadful phase of life in tropical Africa. And yet I am far from sure that Liberia is more insect-ridden than many other parts of the great continent—it may, indeed, in some respects, be slightly less so ; but in this world the mind is ever more prone to magnify miseries present than to compare them with, it may be, the sadder memories of its long-dead if still unburied past.

I have always said since the first day, now more than a quarter of a century ago, upon which I set foot in Africa, that, be their mission what it might, were the consequences never so far-reaching and appalling, I would gladly—nay, gratefully—see the entire insect population of the continent, or, indeed, of the whole round world in which we live, swept into nothingness, annihilated, blotted out. And how much soever these words may arouse dissent, and even reprobation, among those who live comfortably within the limits of the earth's temperate zone, there are probably few of my contemporaries in poor, insect-infested Africa who have not at times, if unconsciously, inclined to the same view. It is a subject upon which it is difficult to know where to begin, or, when one's vituperative powers are in full working order, where to leave off.

Among those insect forms which bring ruin to the cultivator, by depriving him at their maturity of the fruits of his toil, are the Locusts, Grasshoppers, Stem-borers, larvæ of numberless insects which destroy growing crops, Cockchafers which devour the grain, Beetles which suck the juices of the developing maize and millet-heads, a Cotton-boll-worm which, in the larval

stage, eats its way through the terminal bud of the cotton-bush and feeds upon the flower-bud or boll, Cotton Flea Beetles, Cotton Root and Stem Borers, Melon Weevils, the beautiful but appallingly destructive Orange Tree Butterfly which does such immense



1. A Quaint Type of Flying Cockroach.
2. The Transmitter of Sleeping Sickness  
(*Glossina palpalis*).
3. A Malaria-conveying Mosquito.
4. A Hippo-fly, showing Proboscis.
5. A curious Liberian Cricket.

damage to citrus trees, and countless others. Then we come to those insects which injure and destroy stored goods, timber, and other property. Among these are the Blind Termite, commonly called the White Ant, which eats up almost everything not made of metal, the

Horn Beetle, which devours skins and horns of animals, the Clothes Beetle and Worm, which literally riddle clothing, blankets, and all articles containing wool, a Seed Beetle which attacks seeds, biscuits, and vegetable products, Bean, Rice, and Grain Weevils, whose mission in life needs no description, Cockroaches, Wood-boring Beetles, Timber-worms, Fungoid pests of many kinds, and lastly the countless insect forms injurious and often fatal to man and his animals. Among the last named must be included the Mosquitoes, Tsetse flies, Sand-flies, the several blood-suckers of the *Tabanus* order somewhat resembling large gad-flies, the disgusting Tumbu-fly which deposits an egg under your skin, filthy-feeding domestic flies which spread many tropical diseases, Blister Beetles and Ticks.

Let not the astonished reader suppose that this fearsome list contains more than would be included in a study comprising the veriest fringe of this repulsive subject; were my book three times the size it is, I could fill every inch of the available space with heart-rending descriptions of these noisome plagues, and with well-supported indictments against them. But dealing with a few only of those against which our war in Africa is never-ending, I am confronted first and foremost with that hideous pest the Cockroach. Here these insects grow to a length of two inches or more, and at certain times of the year, during the dark hours, take wing and fly. They now appear to lose all dread of man, and seem to enjoy nothing so much as alighting on the back of his neck and running down between the collar and the naked flesh as he sits at the dinner table or is otherwise preoccupied. They love to climb up into your bed and eat your toe-nails, your finger-nails, your hair, affording you unsuspected sensations as they awaken you by running over your face leaving a trail of stench and nauseating foulness on everything they have touched. They are intensely destructive, eating the surface of your book-bindings, glacé kid boots, starched things, and the gum off your stamps and envelopes. I can conceive few more wildly exciting experiences than to

lick the flap of an envelope or a stamp which they have stripped. Their sickening odour permeates the food, except in the most carefully kept of houses whence, by dint of almost superhuman effort, and the employment of metal receptacles, they may be more or less successfully excluded.

Then come the ants. I suppose, of these awful creatures, the most destructive is the Blind Termite, which is really not an ant at all, but has come to be called the White Ant for want of a better name. So much has already been written upon this creature's destructive propensities, that I need not enlarge upon the subject; but another terrible scourge, which seems more prevalent in Liberia than in any other part of Africa known to me, is the frightful carnivorous ant, to which I have already briefly referred, commonly known as the Driver. These wander about the country in vast armies consisting of many millions together. They are of dark reddish-brown, and nearly if not quite half an inch in length. Divided into two distinct classes, the soldiers and the workers, they marched in long columns fifteen or twenty files of workers abreast flanked and protected by the soldiers which are armed with powerful biting mandibles, and which are always ready to rush in pursuit of any hostile agency, quartering the ground in an instant for many yards in eager search for it. It is impossible to estimate the length of these columns, but I have known one of them take two full days and a night to pass across a footpath, and have, of course, no means of knowing how much of the army had passed when first my attention was attracted to them. Once they take possession of a house, there are no means except fire, water, and paraffin of turning them from their path. Nothing can be done. They must be allowed to over-run it and make their exit when they have cleared away whatever may have attracted them. Everything edible to which they can obtain access disappears completely, as do also all the rats, mice, cockroaches, and other domestic pests. The fiercest and most powerful beast of the forest takes

madly to flight before an incursion of these terrible insects. Their invincible columns fall upon and devour every living thing they encounter which is incapable of getting out of their way, leaving nothing but the bare bones behind. It is said that, at one time, in remote portions of savage Africa, a well-known and frequently awarded punishment for certain heinous offences consisted in pegging down the convicted person in the path of an approaching army of Driver Ants, and leaving him there to be devoured alive. This appalling, agonizing death would not bear reflecting upon were it not for the strong probability that the sheer horror of his situation would speedily deprive the unhappy victim of his reason. These insects pursue their way through the forest by night as well as by day, and the plight of any benighted wayfarer awakening to discover his body covered with them can perhaps more readily be imagined than described, with several thousand powerful, pincer-like mandibles deep in his tender skin, each doing its utmost, with no mean or infrequent success, to pull the morsel away.

Another ant quite as terrible in its bite, if fortunately less numerous, is the large red Tree Ant. These insects frequent bushy trees, building therein nests of leaves the size of a football. If one of these strongholds be disturbed, the inmates rain down upon you, and, their jaws being heavily charged with formic acid, their bite is really more painful in its after-effects than that of the Driver.

A disgusting solitary form is the large, greyish-black *Ponera*. On being disturbed or trodden upon, this frightful ant fills the surrounding air with an odour so truly awful that a dislocated drainage system, or the putrefying remains of quite a considerable body, were as perfumes of Araby in comparison. Another of these pests, I think the termite, at certain periods of the year on the appearance of rain, takes wing and comes streaming in through any crack or cranny, surrounding the lamps with tens of thousands of swirling forms which finally fall, cast their wings, and go helplessly

over the floor until swept up and carried away. Numbers of other ant families, each with some spiteful or sinister mission to fulfil chiefly connected with human food, our sugars, and our jams, render these uneatable by committing suicide by thousands therein, especially if it should happen to be one's last tin.

Among blood-suckers we find numbers of flies, mosquitoes, sand-flies, and ticks, leaving aside fleas and bed-bugs, which the singularly unclean native washerman seem to regard it as their special duty if possible to introduce into your linen. I have seen six or seven different mosquitoes in Liberia, two of which were unquestionably malaria-transmitting *Anopheles*. There is also a readily identifiable *Stegomyia*, indistinguishable, almost, from the form which carries the parasite of yellow fever, a disease from which, I am happy to say, the Republic has hitherto been free. It is, however, only fair to remark parenthetically that, taken as a whole, the country possesses but few mosquitoes when regard is had to its tremendous rainfall, and inevitable consequent expanses of forest surface-water, and other concealed moisture, in which they can freely propagate. Still, there are enough to cause much malarial fever, which seems to occur without intermission throughout the year.

Soon after my arrival in Liberia, my attention was drawn, through having on many occasions been painfully bitten by it, to a fly which I at once identified as one of the tsetse group. I made a small collection of these insects, and, as I was unpossessed of the special knowledge which would have enabled me to determine with certainty to which division they belonged, I sent them to the Department of Tropical Diseases of the Imperial Institute. They were carefully examined by Dr. A. G. Bagshawe, who sent them on for confirmation of his opinion to Mr. Guy Marshall of the Imperial Bureau of Entomology of the British Museum. By this gentleman they were pronounced to be *Glossina palpalis*, the well-known, though not, as we now know, the only medium of the transmission of sleeping sickness. These

insects are to be caught daily in the grounds of the Consulate-General at Monrovia, a somewhat remarkable fact when it is borne in mind that, apart from the sea which is close at hand, there is no water of any kind within at least a mile of the building. These flies bite severely, their attacks being by no means confined to the daylight hours. Should one secure ingress to the house at any time in the evening, it will lose no time in attacking the inmates as soon as the lamps are alight, biting with ease through ordinary clothing.

Large flies of other genera are extremely troublesome to persons travelling on the rivers. One of these, similar to the form known on the Zambezi as the "Hippo-fly," a creature nearly an inch long and resembling a huge reddish, green-eyed house-fly, digs his proboscis into you with an effect resembling the determined application of a red-hot needle. Then there is the loathly Tumbu-fly already referred to. Here you have one of Nature's most disgusting annoyances. Most insects of this kind lay their eggs in filth or offal, or extrude their larvæ in a perfect form from the oviduct of the female. Not so the Tumbu-fly, who is much more ambitious for the early nurture of his offspring. By means best known to himself, he—or rather she—succeeds in depositing an egg beneath the skin of the human being or other selected animal. After a time the surface inflames and an exceedingly painful boil or pustule appears, from which, after a certain number of days and more suffering, a horrible maggot emerges, which is, of course, the larva of the fly. I remember a friend of mine who thus gave birth to three of these creatures, and, as he was unaware of the Tumbu-fly's peculiarities, began to imagine that he must be suffering from some awful unknown African disease, who actually undertook a long and costly journey to consult a doctor as to how much of life yet remained to him.

Large Carpenter Wasps both of grey, and another of general black coloration with yellow legs, build their paper or clay combs or nests in all sorts of odd corners. They are not usually harmful unless disturbed, when they will attack and sting fearfully.



There is in Liberia, it is said, the largest and most venomous Scorpion in the world. Mr. P. P. Taylor, the agent of an important British concessionary association in the country, has informed me that he has had specimens of this frightful creature in his possession nearly a foot in length. These apparently inhabit the dense jungle, their place in the opener portions of the country being taken by a smaller member of the same family which is perhaps similar to that known in other portions of the continent. Centipedes here grow to great length, and are to the full as poisonous as elsewhere. Some of them are faintly phosphorescent, and, as all the houses consume wood in the kitchens, they are frequently brought into the back premises by the "Cook's Mate" in the timber which he cuts to feed the stove; thence they often effect an entrance into the house. Spiders are a great feature, their colouring being sometimes gay with purple, yellow, and pale blue. Some of these insects build in the bushes a powerful web, which would almost support a walking-stick. Another spider of hairy exterior, which might almost be taken for a mouse, occasionally causes much consternation in assemblages of ladies, and, it is said, can give an extremely painful and poisonous bite.

I could go on almost to infinity enumerating and describing Tree Cicads, whose monotonous shrilling seems to bore its way into the very centre of your tortured brain; stridulating dolichopods, which gain an entrance into the bedroom and, in the hot sleeplessness of the African night, effectually banish slumber by their unending, unlocatable chirruping; stupid white moths, which gyrate wildly round the table lamps, and usually end their agony by taking a mad plunge into your soup; the Jigger-flea, which bores its way in under your toe-nails and there lays a sack of eggs, and many others, but I feel sure that I have said enough to demonstrate beyond doubt that my exordium at the beginning was by no means unwarranted.

Of course much may be done by the careful mosquito-proofing of residential buildings and offices to

minimize the terrors of the African insect world ; but even with the adoption of this boon to suffering European humanity, occasionally some misbegotten insect pest finds its way in to remind you of what your sufferings would have been had you not been safeguarded by the heaven-sent means afforded by copper netting.

## CHAPTER X

### THE NATIVES

IN another portion of this book it was estimated, upon the authority of the eminent observer Jore, that the native population of Liberia might number between 600,000 and 700,000 souls, and these, I think, may be regarded as falling into three or possibly four well-defined groups, namely, the Kru, Gola, Mpesse or Kipwesi, and Mandingo. It might perhaps simplify matters if they were divided into two groups only, the Mohammedan and pagan, but were this course followed little or no clue would be afforded to the strong tribal and other affinities which subsist between them. Taken as a whole, the number of tribes existing in the country is very large; the 43,000 odd square miles of which the Republic's territory may consist containing fully thirty or even more. M. Maurice Delafosse, a very valued friend of mine who has written considerably and delightfully upon the subject of Liberia, and may I consider be regarded as the leading foreign authority upon the country, has identified no less than eighteen tribes as falling within the Kru group alone; but I fear that there is nobody the results of whose observations can afford us accurate knowledge as to how many tribes the remaining indigenous divisions may be subdivided into.

The Kru people, who are essentially coast dwellers, occupy a lengthy stretch of the seaboard running from Garraway to Grand Bassa; and within these limits, notably at Sasstown, Nana Kru, Setra Kru, and else-

where, their settlements or "towns" are in some cases very large and important, and, on the whole, fairly well kept. At Monrovia, as stated in a former chapter, there is a very large community of Krus living quite apart from the remainder of the inhabitants, governed by their laws, and by officials of their own race and selection. Nearly related to the Krus, and speaking distinctly allied languages, are the Bassas and Greboes, the former occupying the basin of the St. John River, and the latter that of the Cavalla. There are doubtless, to ethnologists, noticeable distinctions to be found existing between these peoples; but as they are only three of the eighteen tribes into which M. Delafosse has divided the Liberian Krumen, we may be permitted perhaps to regard them as sprung originally, in all probability, from one common stock.

But the Kru is one of the few West African natives who have already made names for themselves; and it would not, I consider, be carrying supposition beyond the bounds of probability to say that they are destined in the future to be heard of much more than they have been in the past. By Krumen, for several centuries past, the West African trade to the Grain Coast and elsewhere has been served as by no other division of the people. Of late years they have fulfilled, on board the many coasting and other steamers visiting West Africa, the necessary functions of deck-hands, cargo and coal workers, stevedores, firemen, and many more, in which they are not only entirely competent, but wholly indispensable. On the arrival of a vessel at Freetown, Sierra Leone, she immediately takes on board the necessary gang of Krumen, who will remain with her until she has discharged her cargo in the various ports of West Africa, taken in another consisting of African produce, and returned to Monrovia or Sierra Leone on her homeward way, when they are paid off and discharged and await a new engagement on the next one.

Physically the Krus are fine, sturdy men; certainly not handsome in appearance, which is, as a rule, of a very pronounced Negroid character, but healthy, virile,

energetic. It is a noticeable fact that, in the entire history of the West African coast, the Kru people have never permitted themselves to be sold into slavery. They have taken part, and a very active part, in the slave-trade, it is true, and for many years their determined disregard of law and order in relation to this practice was a terrible thorn in the side of the early administrators sent out by the American Colonization Society. Undoubtedly the Krus substantially benefited by the enslavement of other races, but, with a shrewdness which has invariably stood them in good stead, they have fully realized the advantages of the position which they then assumed, and have resolutely adhered to it ever since. The outward and visible sign of this determined attitude consists of what the Kruman will probably always call his "Mark of Freedom," namely, a curious cicatrization in the centre of the forehead performed during adolescence, and worn, I believe, only by the Kru tribes of Liberia.

But what in the past has done so much for this race, and what is doing so much for them now if in lesser degree, is their unswerving, self-denying devotion to education and self-improvement. The Liberian schools contain large numbers of Kru and Bassa children, who embrace the educational advantages and opportunities afforded them with the utmost eagerness, and strain every nerve to make the most of the instruction offered. Nearly all the Krus speak English, some with great fluency, although in their own homes and settlements they confine themselves to their own difficult, singular-sounding tongue. They are people of very strong prejudices; passionately devoted to their country, their families, and their tribal institutions, and although exceedingly assertive, to the point indeed of aggressiveness, I do not think they are very courageous fighters, or have much perception of the military spirit so strongly characteristic of other divisions of African natives.

Kruman, as I have just stated, are not beautiful to look upon, whilst their women realize almost the last word of human unattractiveness, a disadvantage which

is accentuated in both sexes by their lamentable want of taste in dress. The men, doubtless attributable to their constant intercourse with Europeans on the steamers on which they have laboured, affect the white man's clothing as much as possible. If they cannot obtain a complete outfit, they are quite satisfied with a partial one; but whether it consist of only an old waistcoat, a pair of out-of-date trousers, a ragged overcoat, or a battered top-hat, the thing is worn together with native clothing, and invests the wearer with a grotesqueness of which he is wholly unconscious. Thus, you may see such weird combinations as a white helmet surmounting a costume consisting of a pair of ragged trousers topped by a kind of bodice of very feminine cut made of blue printed calico; an old top-hat crowning an outfit including a dirty white jacket worn over a long, very unwashed flannel shirt and no trousers at all, or, in another case, a woollen stocking-cap of gorgeous, flaming yellows and greens worn with an ancient frock-coat tightly buttoned, the wearer being guiltless of either shirt or trousers. These are but a few examples of the singular apparitions so frequently met with, which, startling at first, rapidly grow familiar to one.

The women's dress and appearance I have some difficulty in dealing with, as their apparel is much more diversified than is the case with African women generally speaking. Elderly females and married women who have arrived at that age which is generally referred to as "comfortable," affect a costume consisting of a length (about six feet) of cotton or other material—not seldom cheap cotton velveteen—thrown round the shoulders and covering the upper portion of the body. Girt round the waist, and descending therefrom skirt-wise to the ankles, is another piece of cotton but much more voluminous, and usually of a different colour or pattern. This latter often supports a young child, carried on the hip or the back. Younger unmarried women wear much less; their needs being considered as largely provided for by a small half-length of calico

secured round the waist, the upper body remaining nude. In some of the remoter villages, the young people are stated to go entirely without clothing up to nine or ten years old, a most excellent and healthy custom, which I have not, however, seen in the vicinity of the Liberian settlements. The younger women, as distinguished from the girls, display a great liking for huge, hideous, and most cumbersome necklaces of beads, some of which surround the throat and bosom many times; they also wear silver or metal finger-rings of most exaggerated size, together with bangles and anklets of the same material, or of beads.

As a whole, the Kru people have very largely embraced the religion of the Americo-Liberians, and their towns and villages contain places of worship where the services are conducted by native clergy, and the congregations are numerous and enthusiastic. The College of West Africa, moreover, an important educational establishment at Monrovia, which is under the supervision of the Methodist Episcopal Church, numbers very many Kru children among its most constant and earnest attendants. It is probable that the various other religious establishments may have gained similar large numbers of youthful adherents.

Whatever the Kruman may be on ship-board, however, where, of course, he is subjected to a salutary discipline, it can scarcely be said that his character ashore is one of which he has much reason to be proud. In Monrovia one hears of nothing else, from the moment Krumen form the subject of discussion, but their extraordinary proneness to take things which do not belong to them, and their astonishing capacity for getting—and remaining—gloriously drunk. But when we reflect upon this side of their character, although these are, of course, very regrettable defects, they are nevertheless shared, with a truly fraternal equality, by every one of the thirty or forty non-Islamic races with which I am acquainted in various parts of Africa. It has always seemed to me that the African, be he Kru or Mendi or Zulu or Makua, is so incapable

of refraining from surrender to temptations such as I have mentioned that it would seem to indicate the necessity of placing him, in so far as offences against property are concerned, in a category differing from that in which other people find themselves. He has clearly embraced, as a guiding principle, the convenient aphorism that the only possible way of getting rid of temptation is promptly to yield to it and look for another. I have purposely excepted from this sweeping and perfectly just statement the tribes who have embraced Mohammedanism, not because I believe that all professed Mussulmans are incapable of theft or intemperance or both, but purely by reason of the somewhat negative evidence perhaps that the only Africans of my acquaintance who were without question honest, sober, and moral, professed to be, and I feel sure were, devout Mohammedans. My evidence, therefore, after some twenty-five years' experience of the black man, is that adhesion to the precepts set forth in the Koran have produced the only and very few truly trustworthy Africans with whom I have so far come into contact—they have likewise produced countless numbers of untrustworthy ones.

The antithesis of the Krumen with their allied families the Bassas, Greboes, and all the rest of them, with their ludicrous aping of other people's clothing, and their noisy assertiveness and attachment to deplorable propensities, are the Mandingo and the Vai. Both these tribes have adopted the Mohammedan faith, and, while being in no way less intelligent than the Krus, possess much more dignity, and are infinitely more interesting and picturesque. The Mandingoes, who are found most numerous in the northern portion of the Republic, now commonly known as the Mandingo Plateau, whence they distribute themselves for purposes of trade of various kinds throughout the country—even inhabiting more or less permanently portions of Western Liberia—are of a more or less nomadic temperament. They have for centuries past been dwellers in well-defined areas of West Africa, especially in French Guinea, and portions



of the division of Sénégal, as in that wide expanse of country through which flow the multitudinous streams forming the source of the Niger. They are not, properly speaking, coast people, and seldom or never remain very long away from the dry, healthy, uplands of the interior of the various divisions of the Guinea Coast.

Who were their progenitors, or whence they originally came, are questions which will doubtless for ever be shrouded in mystery; but there can be little doubt that they possess still considerable traces of Arab blood admixture, a fact which is rendered the more obvious by their unvaried dignified courtesy, their style of clothing, their arms, ornaments, and other peculiarities. In all probability, at some considerable distance of time, they penetrated the forest region of Liberia from the north or north-east, intermingled with the existing natives, and formed a hybrid race retaining much of the civilizing influence imparted to it by slender traditions now forgotten, and by the aid of their religion which they spread broadcast. They form, to some extent, the native aristocracy of the country. In East Africa it is a recognized principle that the local tribes, though called by many names and speaking many languages, know in reality but two divisions: the Mohammedans, who are the influential and often the wealthy section of society, and the *Washenzi* (barbarians, outcasts) who profess not Islam, and are, therefore, in the eyes of the followers of the Prophet, of no more account than the beasts of the field. I believe that to be a feeling which, in greater or lesser degree but usually in greater, permeates the minds of all Mohammedans; and that it is experienced perhaps unconsciously, but to no inconsiderable extent, by the Mandingoes of Liberia, as well as their off-shoot the Vai, who are also very devout Mohammedans, does not to me admit of a shadow of doubt.

But turning from theory to fact, let my reader, with the picture which I have drawn of the coarse, noisy, vulgar Kruman fresh before his eyes, conjure up a tall, dusky, in some cases almost ascetic figure clothed, not in the cast-off rags flung to him by some European

or Liberian, but in flowing, graceful, robe-like costume, one at once picturesque and appropriate. Over a clean, often fine white under-shirt, the Mandingo gentleman wears one of several curious garments. First of all there is a black *kaftan*, not unlike the *joho* of Zanzibar, of black cloth finely embroidered on the neck and wide sleeves, and reaching from neck to heel. This is, I believe, the proper costume for prayer. On other occasions, for use outdoors and the like, a very voluminous cloak is assumed, often of native cotton cloth striped blue and white, and made in the form of a wide-mouthed sack with a hole in the bottom through which the wearer's head is passed. Sleeves may or may not be specially made—as a rule they are, in which case the slit composing them is shielded from sight by a cape-like arrangement sewn on the shoulders. The head-covering is a small, round, neatly worked white cap, very similar to those worn by the Makua of Mozambique, and the feet are protected by leather *babouches* or heelless slippers, or, perhaps more frequently, boots. In place of the richly silver-mounted *jambia* or curved dagger of the East Coast Mohammedan gentleman, the Mandingo of the same caste, as stated elsewhere, slings a short, straight sword by leathern thongs over his left shoulder.

I am convinced that in the future the Mandingoes will make their influence very greatly felt in the destinies of Liberia. They represent already a very considerable force in the land, chiefly as the disseminators of the principles of a religion which may do much for the exceedingly low type of native which inhabits so numerous the interior of the country, largely given up, as they are to-day, to slave-raiding, cannibalism, intertribal wars, and every other conceivable license practised by the untutored, unguided, benighted African. These peoples cannot at present be reached by missions, neither will they leave their forest fastnesses, where a bounteous Nature has endowed them with every, as yet, imaginable necessary of life. But the Mandingo can and does reach them. More than that, he imposes upon them his

picturesque and superior personality; loftily declines to drink gin, or to eat meat over which the prescribed words have not been uttered as the veins of the throat of the animal affording it were cut, and is extremely, ceremoniously observant of cleanly raiment, prayer, and a few other things calculated to awaken the curiosity and emulation of the impressionable native mind. In this way the Mandingoes make easy proselytes wherever they go, and their teachings, simple and harmless in themselves, may prove a not undesirable preparation for the more complicated tenets of the Christian faith of which, as a rule, the African for a long time can make but little or nothing.

If it would not be regarded as out of place in a book of this character to say so, I would strongly advocate, for the mental and moral uplifting of the native of Africa, a simpler form of spiritual fare than that administered to him by the well-meaning but often misguided missions of to-day. Where Islam in the past—as in the present—has appealed so much more to the imagination of the untutored negro is partly in the picturesqueness of its ritual, and partly in its intense simplicity. It is not, moreover, so far as he is concerned, a religion split up into a bewildering number of sects and communions. Apart from such stumbling-blocks as, let us say, the sublime, inexplicable mystery of the Trinity which we ourselves are unable to fathom, and many other things which he cannot even try to understand, the African looks with surprise, not unmingled with suspicion, upon a form of religion administered to him freely in one Christian establishment, but denied to him in another exhibiting, so far as he can see, little or no difference from it, because he has not been taught it there. His is, after all, the mind of a child, incapable of grasping, or even dimly comprehending, such surprising niceties as these.

But mark the contrast. The Mohammedan *malam* enters his village and enchains his interest. All that he is told to do is to abstain from strong drink and swine's flesh; to respect his neighbour's goods; to be cleanly

in his person; to pray morning and evening, and to observe the feast of *Ramathan* for the inculcation of self-control. Now all these things are simple and readily comprehensible, and, therefore, to return to the starting-point of this small homily, I have always thought it a thousand pities that our own and other missions, instead of acting independently as at present to the great detriment of the Native Church in Africa, and beginning by administering to the Negro far more than the latter can either comprehend or assimilate, should not, in the same Name, have put forth a simpler formula involving the observance of similar abstentions to those outlined above, and then, as the seed of their instruction germinated, have gone deeper into matters of mystery, as evidence of the suitability of the soil and the season unmistakably presented itself. There can be no doubt whatsoever that in its readily comprehensible simplicity Islam has scored in Africa; and only, to my mind, by the determined opposition of a *united front* will the Churches make headway against it.

We will now turn to a somewhat remarkable branch of the Mandingo people who have for several centuries been settled in the western portion of Liberia, are also Mohammedans, and are possessed of no small share of intelligence and other good qualities. These are the Vai (which is pronounced to rhyme with "tie"). It is thought that this fine race may have reached Liberia about the same time as the Mandingoes, and, as the occupation of Africa both by man and the lower animals must have begun in the north and filtered gradually southward, it is only logical to suppose that the Vai people entered Liberia from that direction also. If we could compare the Mandingoes with the Arabs of East Africa, and I for one see many points of resemblance between them, then we might go farther and say that such degree of likeness between the two races named reflects itself in that between the Vai and the Zanzibari of the East African coast lands. Both are fine, sturdy races; both read and write their languages, and both are esteemed for their excel-

lence both as personal attendants, retainers, porters, *employés*, etc.

The Vai, although not quite so imposing in appearance as their distant connections who have just claimed our attention, are, nevertheless, a superior and by no means unpleasing race. The individual of this tribe may readily be distinguished by a curious, shirt-like garment of white calico, which takes the place for all ordinary purposes of the long, flowing, alb-like *kanzu* worn by their co-religionists at Zanzibar. But the Vai garment is neither so long nor so imposing. In appearance it is like an ordinary white shirt, descending in two tails to the knee, somewhat embroidered on the bosom, and entered by means of a buttoned opening extending along the right shoulder. Beneath this, a common cotton singlet, and a pair of white calico drawers, wide in the leg and tight at the ankle, are worn. Over all, for purposes of devotion and ceremony, they throw the black *kaftan* similar to that used by the Mandingoes. The women of both these tribes, although fond of a moderate quantity of simple silver or metal ornaments—rings, necklaces, anklets, and bangles—are primitive in their ideas of clothing. As a rule, they do not cover the upper portion of the body at all; a long cotton or calico cloth being secured round the waist and serving for all purposes. On special occasions, however, they throw a piece of blue calico, or, more rarely, black velveteen over their shoulders, but wear nothing in the shape of a bodice. They are not uncomely, and have much pleasanter and more harmonious voices than the females of the Kru tribes as a whole.

The Vai country extends over much of the territory of Grand Cape Mount, and runs practically if not quite up to the Sierra Leone boundary. The people are very numerous, exceedingly industrious, keen traders, and fairly good workmen, and their villages, some of which are extensive, are prosperous and important, if neither very cleanly nor very tidy.

The Vai use a remarkable system of writing, invented

by themselves, which is widely employed. This method of communication is of very recent adoption, and to memorize and apply it must be in itself a very severe test of memory, since it contains no fewer than one hundred and thirty odd characters. Each of these represents the sound of a vowel pronounced with one or more consonants, and, unlike most of the oriental systems, is written from left to right. The signs composing it are extremely grotesque, and, on the whole, the disappearance of this uncouth makeshift cannot, I should imagine, be very long delayed.

In Liberia nearly all the domestic servants, stewards, house-boys, and the like are drawn from among the Vai. They are neither very assiduous nor very honest, in spite of their Islamic beliefs; but in a land where laziness and dishonesty are regarded by the native tribes as rather virtues than otherwise, they are no doubt as good, or perhaps a trifle better, than anybody else. From the moment that a Vai youth enters your service, by some inexplicable calamity his entire family begins to die off. First his grandmother, then his parents, then, when Allah shall have left him a remarkably cheery orphan, brothers and cousins in turn are stricken down one by one. As, however, on each bereavement he applies to you for a small advance wherewith to make the customary offering, as well as a few days' leave of absence to enable him to take part in the obsequies, it is not long before your suspicions are aroused—and in due course confirmed.

The basin of the St. Paul River, and the country thence to the westward, is inhabited by a congeries of tribes consisting of the Dē, Gola, Gbalin, Kisi, Kondo, and several others, occupying a very considerable expanse of country of which the great mart, metropolis, and distributing centre is the large native town of Boporo. The first named of the people mentioned seem to have fallen upon somewhat evil days. In the early years of the occupation of Monrovia by the Americo-Liberian settlers, the Dēs were a race of great consequence, and it was with them that negotiations

for land purchase were concluded. There can be no doubt that these were the natives who forcibly prevented settlement upon Bushrod Island in 1822, and fomented the hostility by which, as we have seen, the immigrants were long assailed. Since these early days, however, from one cause and another, their numbers have dwindled, until now but a small proportion remains spread up the course of the St. Paul River, but entirely destitute of political importance. They certainly speak a dialect differing considerably from those of their neighbours, but are, apart from this unnecessary peculiarity, practically indistinguishable from them.

Apart from the Gola, the Kisi, and the Kondo peoples, who with the Buzi division present no specially interesting features, we now come to the Gbalins, whose country lies to the north of Mount Kwinyei. This is a populous tribe, believed to be in some sort an off-shoot of the Vai. They have several distinguishing features unshared by any of the above-named races, first and foremost among which is that, by repute, they are frank, professing, enthusiastic cannibals. Now the discovery that practices of this kind survive on a moderately large scale within the short distance of 3,500 miles from our shores is one which will probably fill many good souls in England and elsewhere, who devour the flesh of divers warm-blooded animals three times a day with praiseworthy regularity, with startled amazement not unmingled with horror. But when we come to think of it, we are forced to the conclusion that it is nothing short of marvellous that cannibalism in Africa should have subsided as rapidly as it has done. If we ask ourselves what are the staple foods of Negroland to-day; how long they have been so, and whence they came, we shall find that, only a few generations ago, the following actually indispensable food-stuffs, shortage in the harvest of which now immediately produces famine, had not reached African shores: maize, millet, rice, cassava, sweet potato, sugar-cane, coco-nut's, bread-fruit, onions, and nearly all the fruits now cultivated. Upon what, therefore, beyond certain indigenous

roots, fruits, and berries, still consumed in lean times, did the teeming millions of Africa subsist? We are told by no less a star in the firmament of science than Professor Ray Lankester that upon suitable and sustaining food depends not only present well-being, but the entire future of the human race. He adds, somewhat startlingly, that, so far as *à priori* argument has any value in such a matter, it suggests that the most perfect food for any animal—that which supplies exactly the constituents needed in exactly right quantity and in the smallest bulk—is the flesh and blood of another animal of its own species. From a dietetic standpoint, therefore, and putting aside some of the less inviting aspects of the Christian religion, we have in these words an absolute justification of cannibalism, and, as there is said to be nothing new under the sun, it is not only quite conceivable but highly probable that these views are such as the races of men in Africa have been guided by from time out of mind. It is dreadful to think that their usually magnificent physique may in no small measure be traceable thereto. From the early writers upon the Dark Continent and its peoples, we know that even as late as the seventeenth century cannibalism was rife in many parts of tropical Africa. Men and women were eaten at times before the very eyes of the early Portuguese settlers in East Africa, and not seldom they themselves furnished material for the *pièce de résistance*. Horrible as this no doubt was, there appears to have been a not unintelligible reason for it, namely that, from time to time, the people were hard put to it to discover whatever may at that period have been their ordinary means of subsistence. Personally I have little doubt that, without more ado, they promptly caught up their weapons, tightened their waist-bands, and proceeded to raid their neighbours as a matter of course and necessity. Once formed, a taste is long in dying out, and doubtless here in Liberia, and one or two other regions, cannibalism is only now perhaps slowly breathing its last. Nowadays the eating of human flesh has become, for the most part, one



of two things : either a ceremonial forming part and parcel of observances connected with witchcraft, in which, as was brought to light a few years ago in the notorious Leopard Society investigation at Sierra Leone, but very small quantities are actually consumed, or else it may be a form of hideous insanity, possibly the result of much morbid brooding upon the subject of ghouls and wizards, which constrains the person afflicted by it to dig up the corpses of the newly buried dead, and devour the putrefying flesh. This practice is far from rare, as I have twice had occasion to prove, and is one so well understood that, following upon an interment, elaborate precautions are taken to guard against subsequent desecration of the grave.

But quite apart from these two reasons, the Gbalins, and several other tribes to the eastward of them, are said to have an intense liking for human flesh, and to devour war prisoners and such other persons as may fall into their hands with great enjoyment. Prominent among these neighbouring tribes is a large group of people calling themselves the Mās, who occupy the portion of Grand Bassa County lying between the St. John and the Timbo Rivers. Mr. Chetwynd Pigott, an English gentleman who has travelled extensively in the service of the Liberian Rubber Corporation in the interior of the districts named, and knows them intimately, has informed me that, although perhaps the custom may be regarded as dying out, nearly all the older Mās are cannibals, a practice which is kept alive by sections of the tribe called the Krukas or "Skin-men," so called from their habit of carrying monkey or leopard skins to distinguish the sections from each other. It is stated that human sacrifices, followed by a feast, form the principal celebrations of the Krukas, these being held in secret and away from the settlements. In war time, an enemy falling into their hands would most certainly be killed and eaten ; the victorious chief cutting up the victim and sending portions to his friends very much as presents of game are distributed in other lands. Slaves, moreover, when too old for further work,

are often fattened and killed. Mr. Pigott informed me that, on his first visit to the country, an old Mā chief named Gruyu was observed to remark with great wonder and enthusiasm upon the whiteness and softness of his skin, and, smacking his lips, to mutter ruefully to the bystanders that it was a pity he would be so quickly missed, a sentiment in which most of them fully concurred.

The Mās are extremely fond of wrestling; many of the larger settlements possessing, as it were, municipal wrestling grounds where weekly meetings are held and championship matches decided. These are attended by large numbers of people who come in from the distant villages, and the various events are as much discussed, and arouse as much interest, as an important football fixture at home. These meetings are made occasions for indulgence in much conviviality, and last for several days at a time.

Between the upper waters of the St. John and those of the River Cess we find the country of the Gios, between whom and the Mās there are few points of strong resemblance. These two peoples, although their two countries practically march, speak very different dialects, and present other distinguishing features. For instance, whilst both tribes are extensive agriculturists, and their roads and towns are kept clean and tidy, the Gios are hardier, sturdier people, most industrious in land cultivation and good and indefatigable hunters; there is no evidence, moreover, that their participation in cannibalistic practices goes beyond furnishing an occasional feast for their Mā neighbours. This tribe, which may possibly be somewhat more numerous than the last named, have adopted the baboon as a totem, protecting it and regarding it as sacred. The dwellers of the same race in a portion of the country called Dō, regard the Bush-buck, or Harnessed Antelope, in the same light, with the result that these pretty little beasts appear to have lost all fear of man, and may often be seen in the villages in search of food.

In the northern portion of the Gio country, which

borders upon that of the Mpesse or Kpwesi people and extends along the left bank of the St. John River, large weekly markets are held in the principal villages, whereat rubber, kola nuts, palm-oil, rice and other native products are exchanged for cotton goods, brass wire, beads, gunpowder, gun-caps, and other things. The latter are brought in by the Mandingo traders from over the French boundary, into whose territory the produce is carried. This division of Liberia is exceptionally fertile and rich in cattle, of which considerable numbers may be seen; whilst large quantities of piassave fibre are manufactured from the *Raphia* palm for French use, the long distance from the coast preventing its transport thither. Among the few recognized recreations of the Gios is that of gambling, which is indulged in by means of dice made of cowrie shells, the oval portion being cut flat and filled in with black wax. The player takes four of these and throws them three or four times into the air, accompanying each throw by an unceasing succession of weird noises intended to propitiate the genius of good luck. With a quick turn of the wrist he then throws them on to a mat, when, should the sides of the dice turn up even, i.e. two black and two white the thrower wins; if, however, it result in any other combination, he loses. So ingrained has this dangerous vice become among the Gios, that small boys gamble for bits of tobacco leaf, women for beads and bangles, old men staking cattle, slaves, wives, and at times everything they possess on a turn of the dice. Gaming Acts are here unknown, and a gambler failing to meet his engagements is promptly sold as a slave, his purchase money being divided among his creditors.

A curious method of obtaining salt, an invaluable article for which they will do almost anything, is pursued by the Mās and the Gios, who burn the wood of a large forest tree (name unknown). The resulting ashes are collected, placed in a long, funnel-shaped basket lined with plantain leaves, and water poured through them. This water is then boiled and evaporated, the salt crystallizing on the sides and bottom of the pot.

On the right or north bank of the Cess River are the settlements of a very little known people who call themselves the Gbis. Their area, which is quite a large one, adjoins that of the Gios and Mās. The Gbis are said to be a very quiet, peacefully disposed, rather indolent tribe, but astonishingly superstitious, the outcome of the latter highly developed quality being rather an embarrassing one for the stranger, since it is quite against their principles to make roads, of which there are few if any in their country; they are thus seldom visited, and their intercourse with neighbours, either commercial or social, is restricted in the extreme.

But of all the interior tribes of Liberia, probably the most important both numerically and politically is that of the Mpesse or Kpwesi people. These occupy a wide stretch of country between the St. John and St. Paul Rivers, backing on to the French boundary. These are the hunters *par excellence*, and it is a marvellous sight to see them as, even in the thickest jungle, they run lightly and swiftly through it, twisting and turning, leaping and dodging, with almost all the agility and quickness of the animal they pursue. They are a brave, fearless, warlike people who, unlike most Africans, disdain ambushes and cover, and depend on shock tactics and cold steel; their attacks being made in a series of well-concerted rushes, their weapon the knife—bows and arrows being reserved exclusively for hunting. The authority of a Mpesse chief is absolute, and he is obeyed with an unquestioning alacrity which more than hints at the means which must have been employed to acquire it. The villages, which are large and populous, are also extremely well kept, and perfect hives of industry, the most beautiful home-woven cloths of locally grown cotton being made in large numbers. Surrounding these settlements, extensive areas of land are cultivated, and rice, cassava, and other food-stuffs produced in abundance. It is only quite of late that the Mpesse gave up smelting their own iron. This they were wont to do in a furnace fashioned from one of the gigantic ant-hills made by the white termites,

and, from the molten metal thus obtained, they manufactured their knives, spears, hoes, arrow-heads, and all similar articles of daily use. At the present time, however, due to the greater security afforded to travellers journeying to the coast, they find it easier to utilize, for these purposes, imported iron obtained from steamers, or in the Liberian settlements.

The principal sources of the external commerce of the Mpesses are stated to be cattle and slaves ; and it has been reported that, with the latter, they supply almost the whole of the remaining savage tribes of Liberia. In some cases these slaves are war prisoners, gamblers who have hazarded more than they could pay, or criminals ; but a Mpesse man will unhesitatingly sell his father, mother, brothers, or sisters in the calmest and most business-like manner, displaying callous indifference to the not infrequently touching appeals which his victims make to him. They have a very powerful and influential secret or " Devil Society," to which most of the younger generation belong ; the outward and visible sign of membership consisting in a complicated cicatrized pattern on the chest and back. This is produced by passing a steel hook under the skin and pulling up a piece of the outer integument, the morsel thus raised being nicked with a knife and treated with certain acid juices resulting in permanent raised protuberances. The assumption of the sign of membership of the " Devil Society " is, therefore, a most painful ordeal.

The Mpesses offer charming and kindly hospitality to traders and travellers, and, unlike the Krus and their allied tribes, never take advantage of an unarmed stranger. They are musical, and possess a number of well-made instruments, among which may be mentioned a harp which they play with most pleasing effect, a species of flute, or perhaps more correctly a Pan's pipe, also a xylophone, constructed on the same principle as the " Kaffir Piano " of South-East Africa, by laying a number of pieces of dry wood of varying lengths across two supports, and tapping them with a hammer.



**GROUP OF KRU MAIDENS.**



**BASSA HUTS.**



GROUP OF VAI WITH A "DEVIL."



SOME OIL PALMS.





A VAI FAMILY.

They have, of course, in addition, the inevitable drums. Very beautiful leather work is executed in the Mpesse villages, usually taking the form of scabbards, knife-sheaths, belts, basket-covers, and other articles. This is an art which, in all probability, they acquired from the Mandingoes, who are supremely expert in this and other ornamental industries.

In the upland plateaux beyond the forest area, the Mpeses breed large numbers of ponies, which are extremely hardy in that region, but unsuited entirely for work on the coast, where they usually soon lose condition. I am told that on an outbreak of hostilities with neighbouring tribes, the Mpesse chieftains mount a considerable number of their fighting men, a raiding column thus consisting of cavalry as well as of the elsewhere invariable dismounted forces. The numbers of these people inhabiting the far interior have been variously estimated. From the fact that their country is an extensive one, and that they are undoubtedly a very powerful item in the tribes which go to make up Liberia's native population, exaggerated views as to their numerical importance have been expressed. Johnston hazards the opinion that they may number as many as 300,000, but this is very wild guessing indeed since, were it the case, this division would stand for almost half the entire native population of Liberia. I suppose, taking into account the approximate size and number of their admittedly large villages, and assigning to each hut the number of persons which has come to be accepted as a good working average, the Mpeses may be taken as absorbing from 20,000 to 22,000 the inhabitants of the far north of Liberia.

Coming nearer the coast, there remains to be enumerated a very large native tribe nearly allied to the Krus and known as the Bassas. On the whole, and judging from all the information which has been available, one can only come to the conclusion that the Bassa man does not possess quite an enviable reputation either for industry, generosity, or courage. He is, I fear, a person whose prevailing characteristics are in complete contrast to those of the tribes we have just been

considering. He lives in very large settlements, and owes obedience, so far as I am aware, to no paramount chief. Bassas, properly speaking, appear to have no native industries; those near the coast subsisting entirely upon their earnings derived from labour in the service of European or Liberian merchants or planters. They are said rarely to make plantations yielding sufficient produce for their needs, and exist, during a portion of each year, in a state of considerable want upon a diet of palm-nuts, palm-cabbage, and occasionally cassava. They are intensely, disgustingly dirty in their persons and houses, and the *bouquet d'Afrique* which their persons exhale is of a marvellous and surpassing strength and richness.

Ready money among the Bassas, as indeed among all the interior tribes, is known only to the most limited extent; bartering for cattle and slaves being conducted by means of what is known as "Kinja-money." This is a native's load of assorted trade-goods, including gin, tobacco, cloth, brass kettles, and the like enclosed in a "Kinja" or native carrying basket, and worth anything from £2 to £8. As the value of these goods is variable, disputes and wrangles are the usual outcome thus: "A," a chief near the coast, being desirous of purchasing a cow, sends one of his people with a "Kinja" to chief "B," residing sixty or seventy miles inland. "B" receives the messenger politely, provides him with a house and food, drinks the gin, smokes the tobacco, and forwards on the balance of the goods by one of *his* people to "C," a Mā or Mpesse chief living some distance farther on, omitting to mention the abstraction of the articles he has consumed, but asking "C" for a cow in return for it. After waiting several months in "B's" village, "A's" messenger grows weary of the business, and returns to his home, "B" sending to "A" a goat as a present, and stating that he will forward the cow at a later date. Some more months pass, and "A," seeing no cow arrive, but being apprised of the passage through his country of some of "B's" people, promptly,

"catches" them and puts their feet in "slave-sticks," sending back one of their number to "B" to inform him that, unless the cow be shortly forthcoming, they will be sold as slaves. "B," somewhat peevish at this summary but by no means unusual proceeding, despatches a runner to "C," asking for the cow or the return of the "Kinja," but, receiving no reply, forwards an urgent message to "D," another potentate living close by, imploring him to "catch" as many of "C's" people as he possibly can, so that the last named may be compelled to pay the cow which will then be passed on to "A" for the settlement of the transaction and the release of the prisoners. Of course, from such a situation as has by now arisen, the whole country may soon find itself plunged into war and bloodshed, and all the trade-routes closed; but the point of this story, drawn from an incident which actually occurred, is to illustrate the indolent, purposeless character of these people, and the eagerness with which they seize upon any opportunity which may present itself to enable them to foist their responsibilities upon other people.

Native wars sound very dreadful things, and lead, no doubt, to a certain amount of loss of life; they are not, however, anything like so terrible as many suppose, due, in a large measure, to the astounding cowardice displayed. As a rule, except, of course, in the cases of people like the Mpesse, Gbalins, Gios, and a few of the more warlike tribes, the outcome of the declaration of war is the approach, under cover if possible, to a greater or lesser distance from each other of the contending parties; a discharge of firearms, and the simultaneous flight of both sides—the side whose retreat is the less expeditious gaining the victory. The courage and resolution displayed by the Americo-Liberians in the defence of their stockades, as well as in the chastisement of insolence and double-dealing in the first few years of their occupation, must have been a revelation to the tribes against which their operations were directed. One can comprehend the security which

the De and Gola chiefs must have felt in the certainty of being able to oust this handful of new-comers, and the rueful, chastened frame of mind in which they were compelled, so soon afterwards, to conclude a peace. I feel sure that this must have gone farther than anything else to confirm the settlers in the possession of their newly-acquired lands.

In the foregoing sketch of the natives of Liberia, I have chosen to deal with tribes displaying, in so far as possible, the most prominent peculiarities, rather than endeavour shortly to deal with them all, a decision which I reached with some regret, but which owed itself to the limited space at the disposal of the subject. To deal with all these peoples in their ethnological aspect; to lay bare minutely their habits, customs, pursuits, and mode of life would have far exceeded the limits which I have been compelled to set myself, and would have required far more study than I have found myself able to devote to this most interesting subject; but I feel sure that enough has been written to show beyond all doubt what a great and invaluable asset Liberia possesses in the field of labour afforded by her hitherto almost untouched native population, and what an important part they must play in the future development of the country as a whole. Still, for the Liberian Government, the dense masses of the indigenous tribes present problems which are not by any means easy of solution. How best to make use of this great if unwieldy instrument; how to reconcile and harmoniously to adjust the many discordant elements of which it consists, and exactly how to bring the whole of this immense nursery of more or less refractory children under good, lasting, and efficient control, are questions for which, in the meantime, answers are far and difficult to seek. Much has been said and much written of the civilizing and uplifting mission of education as a means in the required direction; but in this connection, if I might be permitted to sound a note of warning, I should be inclined to advocate care lest you make your remedy a greater difficulty than

the original ill—lest it become an actual drag on the task of opening up a portion of Africa whose awakening is bound to prove a longer and more difficult process than was the case with other divisions of the great continent. I always maintain the principle that the education of the great mass of the African natives should be the *reward* of the work which they have to do to further the development, the welfare, and the order of the country they live in. As we have seen, large sections of the people of Liberia are avid for book-learning and for all the advantages which it usually carries with it. But Liberia is not yet ready for such a redundancy of highly instructed material. What she wants is the labourer, the producer, the man with the pick, the spade, and the axe, and him who knows how to use them; and although certain probably exceptionally intellectual native men have been enabled, through great educational opportunities afforded them in the past, to rise to high positions in public life, still we should not be blinded, I think, to the lamentable results which could not fail to attend the indiscriminate education of the labourers of a country which has so much to do to set her economic house in order. I cannot conceive any situation more unfortunate than that of a country where the education of the masses has been overdone, and where, as a result, you see numbers of young and middle-aged men living miserably in all the distress of genteel poverty, who have become unfitted for the work of the artisan, and are only endowed with, it may be, an insufficient smattering of unprofitable general knowledge which, in the face of the immense competition of to-day, is the most unmarketable commodity on earth. No, teach first the necessity and dignity of labour; teach trades, and, above all, inculcate the necessity of a policy of national building up. These as basic principles are of much greater importance for the present than mere “book learning,” for which the intellect of your aboriginal native in a multitude of cases is not, nor for years to come will be, either ripe or ready.

What you might describe as the governing class of Liberia, that is to say those who now and for years to come are ready or qualifying to bear the responsibilities of administration, and consist of Americo-Liberians and a few highly trained and capable aboriginal natives, is a very numerous one. I do not think, at present, that there is a very loud call for an unlimited extension of the educational system now being ably conducted with gratifying results, as I shall endeavour to show in the course of the following chapter. I think, in place of this, some plan whereby the large numbers of the country workers may be brought to see clearly and comprehend fully all that the Liberian Government is and stands for, and how much depends upon a loyal co-operation with it, is, for the time being at any rate, a scheme worth much more to the country and to the people than indiscriminate school teaching of purely educational subjects, and I further consider that the policy so successfully followed by President Howard of initiating frequent conferences with influential headmen from the remote interior for the purpose of explaining the fundamental principles of these important considerations is worthy of the loyal support and appreciation of every thoughtful citizen.

## CHAPTER XI

### SLAVERY—MISSIONS AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS — SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION — IMMIGRATION

FROM the preceding chapter, it will have been evident that, among the aboriginal tribes of Liberia, slavery, if by that term we seek to convey the meaning of a condition of bondage wherein the victim is in complete subjection to the will of another, is a widespread and well-recognized custom. It is, moreover, as ancient as the history of the peoples who, from time out of mind, have made a practice of it. It is a somewhat curious circumstance that the great continent of Africa, from the very earliest days from which its history can be traced, has always been the one country immediately suggested to the mind by the utterance of that ill-omened word "Slavery." Others there are of the earth's divisions where the custom has gained more or less favour and generality of practice; but Africa invariably leaps unbidden to the mind as the scene of all that has been so shudderingly associated with this terrible term which stands for traffic in human beings, and covers with its short span of seven letters a whole world of inhumanity and despair.

But taking the continent as a whole, but little remains to-day of the appalling conditions which, in the latter part of the eighteenth and on into the nineteenth century, gave rise to such horrified amazement, and awakened such a salutary storm of reprobation in England and elsewhere. Slavery, as I have said, is common enough,



but it is no longer accompanied by the fiendish brutalities and cruelties which were practised when the traffic was at its height, resulting in the depopulation and devastation of immense expanses of country; in marches to the coast which might afterwards be traced by the trail of human skeletons left on the way; in voyages during which the victims were chained in rows and lay in a space usually not more than three feet high; in the horrors of the middle passage, when it was common for half the unhappy company to die of thirst; in the unspeakable, unthinkable conditions produced in a shipful of human beings which for many weeks on end was never cleansed; in devastating pestilence resulting in the wholesale casting overboard of still living men and women to the sharks which followed the slave-ships in swarms. All that, and much more, has happily disappeared from the West African Coast, and what remains is innocuous in comparison.

There is, I believe, only one portion of Africa remaining whence slaves may still be exported as a matter of business since we expelled the Arab slave-dealers from Nyasaland in 1896—an operation in which I am proud to have had a humble part—and that is a wide expanse of country east of Lake Nyasa and centring on the River Rovuma. There is reason to believe that, at all events up to a fairly recent date, limited numbers of boys and young women were taken thence in Arab dhows to the several markets where disposal was (possibly still is) effected. These slaves are, or of very late years were, prisoners taken in raids by the Yao, Makua, and other comparatively powerful Mohammedan inland tribes. Gathered together in barracoons on the coast, near the mouth of the river mentioned, concealed waiting dhows took them on board and made rapid voyages to the several distributing centres, namely certain ports on the Arabian Sea, whence the shipments were sent to the markets of Baluchistan and elsewhere. Such conditions existed on the East African Coast, in spite of the well-directed efforts of our cruisers, up to within five or six years ago, and I see

no reason to suppose that it has undergone radical change in the period which has since elapsed. There is, to my mind, little doubt that, but for immediate and stern repression by the Liberian Government, a traffic in slaves on a small scale might easily grow up again on the Liberian Coast, so strongly is that hardy plant rooted in the mind of the aboriginal Negro, and so difficult is it to eradicate the noxious growth. For these among other reasons, therefore, I say that Africa has always been the chief home of that great human family which has, beyond all doubt, supplied slaves to the rest of mankind on the most lavish, wholesale, and unconsidered scale, recking nothing that the countless Negroes so disposed of were condemned to a situation of unfathomable inferiority, although in vast numbers of cases allied to the sellers by ties of race, and often of blood. It is almost as though some disastrous destiny, some bitter, blighting curse, had imposed its baleful influence to scourge the races of the black man through his own deliberate deed by blinding him to the consequences of an act of folly destined for generations to drag with a terrible, crushing weight upon the shoulders of his descendants called to tasks of development, improvement, and general utility for which their sadly depleted numbers are nowadays all too few. What would we not give to have in Africa, available for industry and agriculture, the millions of the offspring of all those countless unfortunates of which the slowly awakening country stands now in such need, and of whom she has been so ruthlessly robbed in the past?

It is very noticeable, in considering the various aspects in which this subject presents itself, that the enslaved races, whilst being often, but by no means invariably, of comparatively poor physique, were, I think, almost without exception pagans in the sense of being non-Mohammedan, whilst those peoples who, since the disappearance of European participation in it, have derived benefit from the trade, whether by capture, agency, disposal, or export, have either been Mussulmans, or

have belonged to a class in constant communication with them. From this we see that, since the African as a whole strongly approves of slavery, the condition of his division into Mohammedan and pagan communities has imported a feeling of acquiescence in, or submission to, the lot which made him a slave which, in countries where the practice is widespread, it may still take a century to obliterate wholly. The custom, to my mind, however, has sprung up originally because the naturally indolent, improvident, unthriftly black man has invariably desired on the one hand to have numerous menials ready gratuitously to do everything for him, and, on the other, to feel himself, in the possession of large numbers of slaves, a person of greater consequence than his neighbours. As time went on, and a vast industry gradually arose in the sale and exportation of slaves to other lands, the Negro master gradually discovered that, in addition to retaining more than enough for his own needs, riches were now his by the disposal of his more superfluous attendants; but whilst the cruelties practised on the East and West Coasts displayed perhaps but little difference in intensity, the fates of the unfortunates who were the victims of the custom differed very materially. For instance, slaves shipped from the East Coast—notably from Zanzibar and the adjacent coast lands—went very largely to the Persian Gulf and to Arabia, whence many gradually filtered through to Egypt and Turkey where, in course of time, they rose, in some cases, to positions of no small consequence in the vast establishments of the great Pashas and others who became their owners. Their lot was more or less that of an unpaid domestic, and their treatment on the whole was no doubt humane and good. But the victims of the European slave-dealers from the Guinea Coast were foredoomed to a very different future. These were the workers, whose sphere in after life was to be plantation labour and the lash in the Americas, with all the accompanying misery and inhumanity which finally went so far to bring the system into disrepute. Not for them was the gorgeous

raiment of the resplendent Turkish Eunoch, or the glittering finery of the Egyptian Saice. Their imagination never strayed to such joys as the rice *pilaf* and the toothsome *kabobs* of their pampered brethren of the East, nor saw, in their moments of wildest exaltation, the relative luxury of their lodgement, and the splendours which surrounded them. Again, the practice of slave export from East Africa was much more difficult to bring to an end than it was in the West because, whilst its pursuit by Europeans from the Guinea Coast had always been looked down upon as a more or less regrettable necessity, on the other side of the continent the pursuit of slave-dealing was never at any time regarded as in any sense a traffic involving moral stigma. It was there an honourable calling, attended by undiminished respect and consideration, and a wealth which was in no way looked upon as tainted. For this reason it continued to flourish long, in spite of treaties, and indeed to this very day it cannot be said to have entirely died out.

But returning to consideration of the slavery prevalent in Liberia among the savage up-country tribes to-day, one must bear in mind that, although unquestionably a condition of helotry exists and human beings are bought and sold, a practice, be it said, in every sense as repugnant to the Government of the country as to the most sensitive person who reads these lines at home, the lives these people lead are often by no means miserable ones, and it may fearlessly be said that their treatment is not, on the whole, either cruel or indeed bad. It must be remembered that large numbers of these slaves are captured in native wars; others, as has been explained, being sold from time to time as a punishment for offences, and other reasons. Their condition is one of pure domestic slavery, or, if we should see fit to dispense with that word, of unpaid menialism, the only really irksome feature (and it may well be doubted if they think very much about it) consisting in the fact that they cannot relinquish at will the service of those in whose charge they are placed. As

we have seen, the African freely acquiesces in the *idea* of slavery, and whether he be the owner, or whether he be the slave, he accepts the position with a resignation so complete as to be closely akin to indifference. I should find it hard to convince myself that, by ninety per cent. of these people, their lot in life as slaves cost them so much as a day of regret or repining.

Still, of course, the practice is an impossible one, destined some day to come to an end. The chief objection to the system of domestic slavery seems to consist in the fact that it is a debasing custom whose victims, though in the vast majority of cases well treated and far from discontented, can never, in the nature of things, assert themselves, or be made to look upon life from a higher standpoint than that to which they have sunk. I suppose that it might be said "Once a slave, always a slave," for this aphorism would indicate accurately and clearly that the circumstance of manumission would not necessarily, of itself, suffice to awaken the man within. You might confer freedom, but you could probably never reawaken independence of character, or stifle the clogging spirit of dependence so inseparable from the condition of a slave. Liberia, in this regard, finds herself in a peculiar position. The country, as we have seen, was established as an asylum for freed slaves. At that time, the export of Negroes from the West African Coast was a flourishing and lucrative traffic, and nobody could possibly say with truth that, from the days of the earliest settlers onward, Liberia had not borne a noble and self-sacrificing part in putting down, at no small cost, a trade which had always been peculiarly abhorrent to the Americo-Liberians. Slavery has never, so far as I am aware, been practised or tolerated by them, and the extinction of the frightful conditions prevalent when they first came to Cape Mesurado seems to have been entirely due to the energetic and uncompromising attitude which they adopted. It is, therefore, somewhat in the nature of an irony of fate that, despite all

they have done, slavery should be so widespread in some of the inland regions of Liberia to-day.

Admitting that it is so, however, it is, I think, undesirable too greatly to exaggerate the importance of what is, after all, but the slowly dying remnant of a great, an almost universal African institution. The projects now under consideration for the development of the country by means of rapid transport are already sounding its death-knell. It is, in a word, one of those wrongs speedily destined to right itself when the railway engine screeches through the midst of the villages of the people who still practise it, and quickens, to the peaceful prosecution of more profitable pursuits, the energies of those backward races of the unknown wilderness whose awakening the Government of the Republic, with even the best possible intentions, has hitherto had no power, possessed no resources to bring about. You cannot wholly uproot a custom such as this in a day or a year by any means known to us at present. To do so *vi et armis* would simply be to arouse an undying, implacable hatred for the authority of the Republic which half a century of peace would be all too short to assuage. Moreover, Liberia does not dispose of forces sufficient to enable such an experiment to be tried. As I think I have pointed out, the evil, in its latter-day aspect, appears to be one which offends sentiment rather than imperils life as formerly, and although it is grievous to think of the existence of many thousands of human beings in a state of virtual bondage, sight should not be lost of the fact that this is a condition which the slaves themselves lament but little if at all, and one from which, even if they were relieved by freedom to-morrow, many if not most would find themselves practically destitute.

One remembers the vehemence with which we pursued, a few years ago, the policy of putting an end at all costs to the legal status of slavery at Zanzibar, where it was suddenly made known that on a certain day, all natives subsisting in a condition of slavery might receive their freedom on applying for it to the proper

designated authority. I was there at the time, and remember very well the surprising meagreness of the response; and although in Liberia the condition of dependence of the slave upon his master may not be so great as was the case at Zanzibar, it seems, nevertheless, a debatable point as to whether the response to a similar invitation from the Republican Government would be very enthusiastic or very widespread. It will come, this cessation of the evil, but it will come best gradually and with as little pressure from without as possible.

Many of these slaves are, of course, females. Their position in the life of a native settlement scarcely differs, in any essential respect, from that of a wife. Like many other parts of Africa, the native provides himself with a wife by means which are indistinguishable from methods of purchase. An agreed price in goods is paid to the girl's responsible relatives, but although this may be called a "Dash" or a present, which means the same thing, if deemed insufficient the negotiations would assuredly be broken off, and the girl, who is in all respects the consideration, would be reserved for a wealthier bargainer. It is, therefore, extremely difficult to draw a well-defined distinction between wife-purchase on the one hand, and slave-purchase on the other. In the cases of some of the tribes, there might be a strong disinclination, or even inability, to discriminate between the status of wives and of female slaves acquired by purchase, in fact I know this to be the case in several districts; the only privilege accorded to a young free-woman, therefore, is the somewhat shadowy one of being permitted—not always with success—to object to the person of the proposed bridegroom. Once the married state has been entered, however, it would usually be difficult to detect much difference in the positions which these two classes of women occupy. It will thus be seen that the African social fabric is at present one built upon a foundation of debased moral views of life, which it seems rather the duty of the missionary than that of the Government to purify and uplift.

What I would have those of my readers who may have experienced, on perusing these pages, a sense of something like dismay to remember is this: that the slavery of the past, the terrible, blighting scourge of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which depopulated West Africa, and not only the coast but many portions of the far interior as well, is a thing of the past and dead for ever; and although we would fain witness the total disappearance of any human institution to which such a term could with even the shadowiest of justice be applied, it must be realized that the domestic slavery existing among the interior tribes of Liberia to-day no more compares with that of a century ago, as it was contributed to by Europeans, than light compares with darkness. The time is now fast drawing nigh when Africans of all races and of all tongues will realize the blessings of freedom, that priceless heritage so inextricably bound up in all that goes to make Liberia the home of those whose forefathers once knew bondage in its worst and most debasing form; but whether the African will for many years realize and put to good use this great gift of freedom when it is conferred upon him may well be doubted. His case, when he receives the leopard's tooth which, in the custom of these people, confers without any other formality the status of a freeman, will, I fear me, be like that of the long-confined prisoner of the Bastille, who, when released, blinked his unaccustomed eyes at the strong light of day, and longed to return to the dingy dungeon which had been so long his home that he had ceased to yearn for any, other. I do not, therefore, look for the entire rooting out of domestic slavery in Liberia until the last generation of those who have practised or been involved in it shall have passed completely away.

I have stated it as my opinion that the mission influence in a country is the one which, rather than that of the Government, should be directed towards the discouragement of inconvenient if deeply-rooted native customs, and in Liberia there is assuredly an



abundance of religious establishments capable of undertaking this important work. But the country is a religious one, where the outward and visible sign of much devotion is very plain to be seen wherever you go. Church attendance among the Americo-Liberians—as among very large and, I believe, increasing numbers of native Christians—is extremely regular, whilst religious services and exercises of all kinds are undertaken with a quiet enthusiasm which commands respect. In the capital city of Monrovia, as I have already stated, there are four or five places of worship, two of which are commanding and well-proportioned buildings. Here church services are held with great frequency, and the congregations are usually large.

The growth of mission influence in the country, since its inception in 1836, has been a steadily growing one. In that year a coloured missionary named James Thompson commenced the important work which was to develop from his efforts by establishing a humble school for native children in the neighbourhood of Mount Vaughan. What this has grown into may best be gleaned perhaps from that admirable American publication the *Spirit of Missions* for the month of August 1913. In that number is outlined the progress attained to as reflected in the report of the late Bishop Ferguson, until recently the deeply respected head in Liberia of the Protestant Episcopal Church. The Bishop is stated, on the authority of the paper mentioned, to have said that, while the number of baptisms at the date of his report had reached the very encouraging total of 9,565, and of confirmations 4,856, the actual number of constant communicants was 2,044. The spiritual care of all these people is confided, in the large coastal districts in which the mission labours, to 26 coloured clergy, 25 lay teachers, and 46 catechists, whilst, exclusive of places of worship, the buildings erected by, and the property of, the mission consist of 22 day schools, 19 boarding schools, and 38 Sunday schools, valued at \$122,000 (£24,400), and affording instruction to some 1,900 day scholars and boarding pupils, and 2,714



BAPTIST CHAPEL AND TYPES OF LIBERIAN HOUSES.



ASHMUN STREET, MONROVIA.

regular attendants at Sunday schools. This seems to me to be a very striking measure of success, particularly when it is remembered that the missions ministered to by the Protestant Episcopal Church are those of one out of six or seven other religious organizations, all of which possess large numbers of adherents. In the time which has elapsed since this Mission was established, its work has spread over the four counties of Monterrado, Grand Bassa, Sinoe, and Maryland, the districts in each having been suitably subdivided. It has been well directed and supported by that excellent undertaking the American Board of Missions, of which it must be a great satisfaction to workers in Liberia to feel that it is approaching to within measurable distance of independence.

The Methodist Episcopal Church is another American religious establishment which, whilst very active throughout Liberia, does not confine its energies in Africa to the political limits of the Republic. I have seen and had occasion to admire its efforts in Portuguese East Africa, where it has established schools which, I believe, have more than justified their existence. Superintended by my old friend Bishop Hartzell, who bears the designation of American Methodist Bishop of Africa, it has been established over eighty years, and has upwards of 60 officiating clergy and teachers, more than 70 schools, and its pupils number between 4,000 and 5,000.

The Lutheran Church, belonging to another American Society, has its headquarters at Muhlenburg on the St. Paul River. This body employs a number of white American ladies and gentlemen, and is doing excellent work among the offspring of the Golas, Des, and other riparian tribes. I was recently informed by one of the ladies who superintend the girls' section, that the female children of the races mentioned display most encouraging brightness and promise, and come in to learn in ever-increasing numbers. Over and above religious instruction and elementary educational subjects, they are taught household management, sewing,

cooking, and a variety of other useful matters. On the opposite side of the river, boys and youths receive practical teaching in such desirable handicrafts as carpentry, masonry, shoe-making, and the like, in addition to reading, writing, and educational subjects. There are, as well, other missions connected with the Baptist Church, the Presbyterian Church, and the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

It will thus be seen that there is no lack of well-directed missionary organizations, though it must be conceded with regret that not all of them are in a financial position greatly to extend their present spheres of usefulness. So much is this the case, indeed, that one or two succeed in meeting their expenditure only by dint of the most rigid economy, an economy which goes far to paralyse thought and initiative and even effort, while it reacts disadvantageously upon the physique as well as the *morale* of the courageous men and devoted women who are giving of their best in the cause they serve.

All these missions have made sufficient progress to enable one to say with confidence that they are necessary, that they are doing good, and that they are deserving of every encouragement. But, if I might be allowed to speak with great frankness, I would observe that, in my opinion, it would be productive of still greater and more far-reaching good if these admirable institutions were to devote a little less attention to the coast lands, where every native, in greater or lesser degree, is already acquainted with religious doctrine, and can now receive all necessary instruction, and enlarge their borders towards the hitherto unvisited up-country regions. To minister to the moral and intellectual needs of those savage tribes who are still plunged deep in the darkness of the most abandoned superstition, and for whom the teachings of missionaries, and what they stand for, are unheard-of mysteries towards which their minds, such as they are, have never for one moment strayed, seems to me to be the object to which missionary effort should without delay direct

itself. On the whole, I consider that the coast has had already its full share of attention for the present. Between it and the country of the really wild tribes there is quite a sharp dividing line. You might take a map and paint one black, and the other—well, almost grey, this serving to indicate that in the forest country the light of instruction had never penetrated, and that its illuminating force had been stayed in the past by—shall we say—the density of the interwoven jungle? But it is quite time that the other side of the dividing line was approached, when, properly undertaken, I shall look for great and important results. From such a campaign as this, every sort of advantage may be expected. Putting apart the gradual establishment of more intimate relations with the peoples themselves who, at present, but dimly realize what the meaning of the Liberian Government is, the getting into touch with the remote tribesmen would pave the way for the best kind of development which could well be devised. The presence of missions in the country would, after a while, lead to the opening and extension of inland roads, and, more important still, an increased measure of safety for the foot-passengers travelling over them. Little by little administrative officials would find means safely to establish themselves, and, by tactful handling, bring the up-country tribes to understand the important share which they should bear in the opening up and good government of the country. As time went on, and these principles grew to be better understood, a harmless system of light taxation, its object thoroughly explained, might gradually be introduced, labour and the results of labour in the shape of agricultural and other produce being freely accepted in lieu of actual coin. By this time events would be marching at a greater pace. The instruction of the mission schools would be putting forth a fine crop of fruit. Inter-tribal wars would have grown rare; the cultivation of cotton, coffee, cacao, and many other important articles of export, would not only have vastly increased, but placed a great proportion of the

people in a position to pay their taxes in good minted coin. No more complaints of the diversion of rubber and other raw material to the adjoining colonies would be heard, and, as events shaped themselves, by dint of careful and prudent management, the up-country tribes, whose immense value to the State is at present but dimly realized, would be brought to comprehend the advantages of enlightened governance, as well as be contributing their full share towards the consolidation—the building up—of the Liberian Republic. All these things the missions can assist in realizing as can no other influence, and I am sure that nobody feels it more fully than they do to-day.

Again, from the presence of educated Americans and Liberians in the far interior, an accurate knowledge of what the country contains would gradually reach the coast. All the wonders of its marvellous unknown forests and lofty unscaled mountains would, little by little, be laid bare. The zoology, geology, mineralogy, its splendid flora and fascinating physical geography would be opened out to enrich our knowledge of Africa, and lead to the surrender of Liberian wealth at the call of European and American capital. Let us remember that many of those whose names are most deeply engraved on the heart of the great continent which they served so well began their careers as missionaries of Christ, and ended them as pioneers of economic development. Of such as these were David Livingstone and Ludwig Krapf. The importance of their discoveries, the vast significance of the bright beam of the light of civilization which they shed upon a darkness such as only poor Africa has ever known, need no words of mine to attest their eternal value. They belonged to a restricted class of men from which, in the past, other great missionaries have been drawn. All have not had the same great opportunities, of course, but what I feel is that, here in Liberia, which would seem in so far as its unknown resources are concerned to realize our conception of darkest Africa, is afforded, on a somewhat reduced scale perhaps, such an opening

as Livingstone saw when he devoted to research work the remainder of his career after his first memorable journey across Africa. It is, indeed, a great opportunity, and one for which missionaries in other lands have sighed in vain, for this is no ordinary missioning. The men who are sent over the border-line to hold the gate in a land which has too long known but darkness, must be of the best that can be found, or they would be worse than useless. For the great *rôle* which they will have to play only men of the loftiest aims, the most uncompromising principles, and the highest possible conception of conduct and morality should be chosen. It is not so much what at first they will actually teach which will constitute the thin end of the wedge of mutual confidence; it is rather the immense and increasing value of the example set by their upright and blameless lives to a wondering barbaric world which will not, I venture to say, be so very slow, according to its lights, in making some attempt, however uncouth, to go and do likewise. Such men are to be found. They are, of course, the born missionaries—something of a priest, something of a diplomat, something of a soldier, and all three great qualities cemented, welded, riveted together by an ever present sense of the boundless importance of the great work which they have set their devoted hands to do. It is to such men, in my opinion, that Liberia must look for aid in the first feeble steps along the road which will lead to an united household. They are, as I have just said, to be found, and, if I mistake not, some of them are already within her borders.

Hitherto, as will have been gathered from the foregoing paragraphs, the scene of missionary activity in Liberia has been as a whole near the coast, and not seldom, in times of stress and native turmoil, the good men of the various establishments have done their utmost, with no mean measure of success, to assuage quickly aroused rancours, and to ally the bitterness of inter-tribal jealousies. They are, and always have been, respected and deferred to both by the Americo-



Liberians and the aboriginal tribes, and, as we have seen, their sphere of usefulness has grown and expanded. One very striking result of the value of the training afforded by the religious establishments now actively engaged is the large number of pure-blooded natives—Krus, Bassas, and Greboes—who have become ordained clergymen of the various denominations. Some of these minister entirely to native congregations, whilst others have many Americo-Liberians as members of their churches, and are greatly esteemed as much for their abilities as for the simple correctitude of their daily lives. They form, in my view, a promising factor in the future instruction of the various teeming coast tribes.

Turning to the important question of secular teaching, this is controlled and supervised by the Department of Education, the head of which holds a seat in the Cabinet. For the actual needs of the pupils, there are three grades of certificated teachers, whose work is, to some extent, overseen by local school committees. Each county possesses a school commissioner, whose duties include the examination of candidates for vacancies on the instructional staffs; the holding of unannounced quarterly inspections, and the drawing up of reports upon general efficiency which are rendered to the Government Department concerned. Although education is in a sense obligatory, it is found that, due to the necessity for the employment of large numbers of boys and girls at their homes during the day, it becomes somewhat difficult to compel attendance; evening classes are provided for such as are unable to attend earlier, but it is extremely doubtful if the regulations in force reach more than a small percentage of the large numbers of the children whom they were drawn up to benefit.

I cannot give the exact number of the secular schools existing in Liberia at the present time; but there are perhaps not more than 60 or 70—certainly not so many as those under the direction of the various missionary organizations. Of these latter, as we have

seen, the leading educational body is the Protestant Episcopal Church. Some of the buildings belonging to this denomination are exceedingly fine and well-built, chief among them being the Alexander Crummell Hall for young men at Clay Ashland on the St. Paul River, and the fine Girls' School at Bromley, close by. Both these afford educational advantages and accommodation for considerable numbers of young people of both sexes. In addition to many other schools scattered over the country, this mission possesses a strikingly efficient establishment in the Cuttington Collegiate and Divinity School in Sinoe County, where is also established the Epiphany Hall. There is also an Orphan Asylum and a Girls' School. For all these reasons, it may be readily seen that the leading religious educational factor in the country is the mission to which these various educational establishments belong; but over and above the foregoing, excellent instruction is administered at the College of West Africa at Monrovia, which is superintended by the Methodist Episcopal Church. This building accommodates a large number of boarders, and children of both sexes attend daily from the outlying portions of the city. Their studies are supervised by a very capable staff of coloured teachers, some, if not all, of whom obtained their training in the United States. The course of instruction offered by the College covers a period of eight years, and includes a preparatory course of two years spent in the Primary School, three years in the Grammar School, and three years in a branch known as the High School. Religious workers are trained in a special divinity department. Another branch of the College furnishes valuable preparation for those desiring to adopt an industrial career, and instruction is given in such handicrafts as shoe-making, printing, carpentry, and smith's work. The College of West Africa, therefore, covers probably more ground than any other of the schools of the Republic. It is, to some extent, a self-supporting institution, fees being paid for tuition, as also for the board and lodging of those who elect

to reside upon the premises. The payment of these extraordinarily small charges is greatly facilitated, for those who choose an industrial career, by the opportunities afforded of earning a portion of them.

Last, and in some ways, most important of all comes the Liberia College, which is, in a sense, the University intended to place the finishing coping-stone upon the fabric of learning built up by the schools which we have been considering. Liberia College stands on an eminence about half a mile from the city of Monrovia, and is a large, square, somewhat unlovely building apparently, at present, in a state of considerable disrepair. It receives, in normal times, a number of boarders—80 or 90 I believe—from various parts of the Republic, as well as a considerable contingent of day scholars from Monrovia and the outskirts. It has never known the comfortable feeling which springs from complete freedom from financial cares, and this lack of adequate provision has gone far to undermine complete efficiency and thoroughness. It possesses, I understand, certain small funded resources in the United States, and receives, when funds suffice to enable it to be paid, a comparatively substantial subvention from the Government. In all the four counties, moreover, pieces of land of 1,000 acres have been set apart for the College's benefit, though the exact amount of the accruing advantage is not probably as yet very great.

Shortly before the outbreak of war, education in Liberia as a whole received a welcome windfall in the shape of a sum of about £13,000, the proceeds of a fund held in trust for many years by the American Colonization Society. What will be done with this money seems a little uncertain. On the one hand, plans are suggested for improving the position of the National College just mentioned, whilst on the other it is thought that the best form of employment to which the money could be devoted would be the establishment of a great normal and industrial institute to meet modern demands. On the whole, I think, neither of these

schemes should be adopted. The income arising from the judicious investment of this fund would, to my mind, be much better employed in augmenting the salaries of the teachers now labouring at pitifully low wage, and without any encouragement, in the prospect of improved circumstances, to increase their efficiency in any way. The stipends of the great mass of those upon whom the country depends for the education and instruction of future generations, rates of remuneration which are not high in any country, amount, on the average, according to a report issued by the General Superintendent of Schools, to no more than about £30 a year, a fact from which it is easy to deduce that the best material is certainly not being obtained for the purpose. I fancy that the report referred to is the last which has been issued upon the subject, and, although it is several years old, I see no reason to suppose that any improvement in the school-teachers' conditions of life and service has taken place in the interval which has since elapsed. In the various suggestions which have been made to bring about radical changes by means of the recently received fund, no reference, so far as I am aware, has been made to the needs of the school-teachers; I am, therefore, unable to see any wisdom in erecting fine new premises, or incurring heavy expenditure in the rebuilding of old ones, so long as no improvement is effected either in the efficiency or the prospects of the teaching staffs at present employed. Such a course would seem to savour of the story of the child who, having received an unexpected gift of a shilling, promptly spent it in the purchase of a purse to keep it in. Better and more permanent results would assuredly be obtained by improving the positions of members of the instructional staffs; offering better inducements to the best available material to embrace the scholastic career, and providing more modern textbooks and furniture than those now in use. These are purposes which the income derived from the Colonization Society's money should amply suffice to fulfil, whilst more ambitious projects might well be left to a time

when greater resources may be available to enable them to be carried to realization.

Before leaving the interesting and important subject of education, it may not be without interest to glance for a moment at what takes place among the savage tribes of the inland regions at the period when their young people arrive at what is popularly looked upon as the receptive age. It may be considered perhaps that these lines should have formed part of my chapter upon the natives, but for several considerations I have thought it better to include them here.

I suppose that in Europe it is generally believed, if consideration be paid to the matter at all, that the pagan tribes of the dark continent—those who, for one reason or another, have not had the advantage of an education based upon the foundation which Europeans would regard as essential—receive no education at all. The idea suggests itself probably that they grow as the flowers of the field, and absorb, in the course of their journey through life, the small modicum of general knowledge sufficient to deliver them from peril, and to maintain them in such comfort as they understand and appreciate. This, however, is not the case. From the cradle (if he were nursed in one) to the grave the African is surrounded, hampered, crushed, by an unending series of tribal conventions, some good, some mediocre, and some horribly bad; but these, such as they are, have to be taught to the young, and thus the boys and girls of most of the tribes in Africa with which I am acquainted find themselves, on arrival at the age of puberty or thereabouts, faced with the necessity of submitting themselves to a lengthy course of instruction in their duties in life.

That most eminent Negro authority on all things West African, the late Dr. Wilmot Blyden, LL.D., who has left an imperishable name as well in Liberia as in neighbouring British colonies, informs us that one system or process of education, which was well known to him and had been pursued as far back as it was possible to trace it, prescribed a period of three years'

training to all young people in the interior. This course, as we may term it, which continues in great vogue, takes place in a separate establishment built for the purpose at some distance from the pupils' homes, which they are not allowed to revisit during tuition. That for girls is separate, and established at a considerable distance from that of the boys, and general knowledge of a very wide range of subjects is carefully imparted. The teachers of the girls are elderly women of experience, and invariably widows. Dr. Blyden, in his notes upon this portion of the subject, contrasts the European system of sending girls to school where they are taught (*as he supposes*) the responsibilities and mysteries of life by a "paid spinster," and he triumphantly demonstrates the superiority of the methods of the uncultured African, whose young womenfolk are trained in their duties as wives and mothers by persons who are competent to teach from experience. Poor man, I wonder what he would have thought had he known that, so far as their places of education are concerned, the great majority of young white women go to their husbands entirely ignorant of these vitally essential items of knowledge. Not only are matters of this kind carefully laid bare by the tribal preceptresses, but household management, cooking, the care of children, and other admirable branches of instruction, including, as one learns from another authority, propriety of conduct, the necessity of abstaining from loud-voiced wrangling, and the desirability of treating their husbands with meekness, deference and respect. It seems clear from the foregoing that we in Europe, so far from having anything to teach the benighted pagan, have, in reality, much to learn from him. I am aware of a good many circles where the adoption of some modified form of such methods as these would be welcomed with enthusiasm.

The school for boys is known by a variety of names in the various districts; but its *rôle* is always more or less the same. The pupils are taught the tribal traditions, songs, dances, mystical signs, super-

stitutions and passwords, also, if it have one as many do, its secret language. They are instructed and encouraged in manliness, and taught their responsibilities as husbands and fathers, as also practically every duty of after life. In Mohammedan divisions circumcision now takes place, and the youths receive new names, those by which they have been known since birth being permanently discarded. During this period of segregation their food is taken to them daily by members of the family to a certain appointed place, but no woman is allowed to go near the school settlement. Should any unfortunate female intrude upon it, knowingly or unknowingly, she would certainly be killed, and in all probability eaten. The boys are disguised, and wear a special costume which completely conceals them, whilst, during the entire period of their training, they are cut off completely from their friends and families. The teachers are elderly men, who receive payment for the instruction afforded; they are rarely unemployed, as, on the dismissal of one class or batch of young men, another is usually waiting to begin the course.

Africa has possessed these institutions from time immemorial. They represent, in an interesting, almost pathetic manner, the black man's dim comprehension of the duty which he owes to his offspring. They are undoubtedly schools, after a fashion, but might perhaps in view of the peculiar nature of certain of the instruction given, be more correctly compared to the sodalities of the great Roman Catholic training colleges. In the neighbouring colony of Sierra Leone, one of these native organizations, called the Bundo Society (for the education in domestic matters of the women) is so ancient that, as Dr. Blyden wrote concerning it, "No one knows, and no one in any of the tribes can imagine, a time when the Society did not exist." The Porroh Society is a similar institution for males. To the latter, from time to time, several European missionaries and others have been admitted in Sierra Leone and elsewhere, and appear to have been uniformly impressed

by the surprising usefulness of the instruction disseminated.

Such is a brief and very imperfect sketch of religious and educational effort at present grappling with serious problems of many kinds in the various portions of the Republic of Liberia. That they are producing very important results, hampered as they are by every sort of disadvantage arising from lack of funds and resources, there can be no shadow of doubt; but what they lack in one respect to some extent they gain in another, namely in enthusiasm. It would be difficult to find any other territorial division of Africa where the thirst for knowledge was greater, and the inconveniences—often the privations—which many will undergo in pursuit of it are almost incredible. These advantages are no doubt of the greatest importance to the communities which they are intended to benefit; but, as I have said elsewhere in the course of this book, they can be carried to a point at which they cease to be a benefit, and become almost a curse.

Bearing in mind the extensive preparations which Liberia, even under great difficulties, is making for the training up of citizens, and when one comes to reflect upon the passionate attachment to their country, which the Americo-Liberians so unmistakably manifest, it seems scarcely probable that much further immigration from the United States or elsewhere will take place, or even be necessary. Arrivals of Negroes have been rare events for many years past, and these, especially from America, seem to show no signs of increasing in frequency. For this there are, no doubt, many reasons. To begin with, for the new-comer, work, and exceedingly hard work, must face him from the day of his arrival. This is inevitable in a country whose industries require building up anew, and the working man, who is perhaps more urgently required than the representative of any other class, finds on landing that he must commence at the very beginning. It is an oft-repeated statement in the larger centres that Liberia wants craftsmen, carpenters, masons, and the like; but I am by no



means sure that this is strictly correct. There is at present no lack of men of this class, some Liberians, others British subjects from the neighbouring colonies. They are not very good or very finished workmen, it is true, but they know at least something more than the rudiments of their trades, and are very willing to learn, and to labour for low wages. During the last two or three years a number of superior buildings have been erected at Monrovia, but I have never heard from any person engaged in the work that undue inconvenience was experienced from the lack of sufficiently skilled handicraftsmen, or from the incompetence of those employed. As, therefore, Liberia in its present condition offers no immediate employment at tempting wages to the coloured working classes of the United States, the latter probably consider, with right on their side no doubt, that their present lot may be quite as enviable as any that may be awaiting them on the African side of the Atlantic Ocean.

What would remain for them in Liberia—Politics? The avenues are already choked by vast numbers of unemployed if hopeful candidates. Trade? There is not enough at present to go round. Agriculture? Perhaps, but success must depend on the immigrant, upon his age, physical capacity, and, above all, upon his being in possession of resources sufficient to tide him over until the soil produces the return for the labour expended upon it. There are, of course, in the United States many thousands of coloured men who, introduced judiciously into Liberia and not in a flooding swarm, would undoubtedly be of immense service in the development and opening up of the country; but they would require to be carefully chosen, each one with due regard to the particular qualifications which he possessed. There should be no drones—none of the numerous class whose members, whilst professing to be able to turn their hands to anything, usually end by becoming burdens upon those whose specialized training in early life has enabled them to create for themselves positions of usefulness and independence.

Liberians often state that the country requires more and still more immigrants, and so no doubt they feel; but it does not need, neither does it hanker after paupers. It has no use, any more than have our own African Colonies, for the resourceless person who comes unsponsored and unsupported. Such as these are not going to afford the aid, direct or indirect, which a democratic community has a right to expect from its citizens. And so, when Liberians say that they would welcome almost wholesale immigration from America, I often wonder if they quite understand or mean what they say. It would almost appear as though the opinion uttered were one formed without due consideration—without full comprehension of the situation which would be created by the fulfilment of their wishes. In a young country—and in an old one too for the matter of that—unemployed hands are not only a nuisance with a suspicion of discredit attaching to them, but actually a drag upon the progress of the community as a whole. For all these reasons, therefore, it would seem highly undesirable that immigration from the United States to Liberia should, for the present at any rate, assume larger proportions than it has done for many years past.

## CHAPTER XII

### CLIMATE—HEALTH—GENERAL RECAPITULATION AND CONCLUSION

FROM the figures contained in the appended tabulated statement, for which I am indebted to Mr. G. A. Taylor, the able manager of the Mount Barclay Plantation of the Liberian Rubber Corporation, Limited, it will be seen that, whilst the annual rainfall is enormous, the actual temperature experienced is never absolutely unbearably hot. To persons who have never experienced tropical climates, a temperature of 95° or 96° Fahrenheit may appear very formidable; but if he be provided with a well-built house and suitable apparel there is really little or nothing in such a temperature to incommode or distress, especially when, within the span of each twenty-four hours, the thermometer declines ten or more degrees. Still, the atmosphere is so charged with humidity, even during the dry months of the year, as to provoke great perspiration on the smallest exertion, and the discomfort attendant upon this, with the various skin irritations which excessive surface-damp causes, is sometimes hard to bear. The greatest heat I have experienced in Africa, which occurred on the Shiré River in the month of October 1895, was 116° Fahrenheit inside the house at two o'clock in the afternoon. It only declined to slightly below 100° at midnight. This, without doubt, was very hard to support cheerfully, particularly as it prevailed after some months of continuous heat, and not less than two before the first deluges of the summer rains. But, curiously enough,

although much nearer the equator, no such temperature has ever been reported from any portion of the Liberian Republic. On the sea-coast I have never seen the mercury in the thermometer exceed  $86^{\circ}$  in the house, whilst occasionally it has fallen, especially at the height of the rainy season, as low as  $65^{\circ}$ . At that time of year, however, many days will often pass during which the sun is entirely obscured, the wind blowing with some force from the south or south-west, whilst surrounding objects at a slight distance are completely blotted out in a nerve-shattering, never-ending pall of continuous rain which roars upon the roof night and day until it produces a dull brain-weariness which is not headache but simply nerve torment. Was it not Schumann who died insane because he fancied he heard the common cord of A minor perpetually droning in his ears as though from the strings of a violin? I have frequently recalled poor Schumann's fate as, hour by hour, the roar of the rain upon the roof of my house has filled my head with a vague weariness until I longed for relief almost as much as the tortured musician must have prayed for deliverance. But these days and nights of continuous rain and interminable southerly breezes produce a considerable drop in the temperature of this otherwise somewhat torrid coast-line, and care must be taken during their prevalence to avoid cold and chill. The foregoing, however, is the temperature as experienced on the coast. Mr. Taylor's figures, being steady observations taken at a distance of only ten miles or so from the sea, indicate that, although the details of the statement were noted at a slightly elevated point, the heat generally experienced there is somewhat greater. It is, in my opinion, very probable that the farther the coast is left behind, the greater the temperature becomes until the forest belt has been passed; whereupon, on the open plateaux beyond, there occurs not only a sensible diminution in the volume of the rainfall, but a much more bearable because dryer heat.

Although the actual commencement of the rainy season is somewhat capricious, it would probably be

## METEOROLOGICAL REPORT FOR 1913.\*

Date.	Max.	Min.	Rain-fall.	Date.	Max.	Min.	Rain-fall.	Date.	Max.	Min.	Rain-fall.
1913							0.80				9.40
Jan.				Feb.				Mar.			
1	92	73	—	1	95.5	73	—	1	95	70.5	—
2	90	73	—	2	93.5	74	—	2	93.5	72	—
3	88.5	71	—	3	96.5	74	0.15	3	94	71	0.50
4	91	71	—	4	85	70.5	1.43	4	89.5	72	0.67
5	88.5	72.5	—	5	91	72.5	—	5	90	72	0.03
6	90	72	0.1	6	94.5	71	—	6	92.5	71	—
7	86	71	—	7	92	70	—	7	93	70	—
8	92	70	0.68	8	93	69.5	—	8	94	70	—
9	90	71	—	9	94.5	74.5	—	9	93	72.5	—
10	—	—	—	10	94.5	71	—	10	94.5	73	—
11	92	71	—	11	98	71	—	11	95	74	—
12	93	71	—	12	94	70.5	3.82	12	94.5	71.5	—
13	93.5	70	—	13	90	72	3.2	13	93	74.5	—
14	92.5	71	—	14	90	70.5	—	14	94	74	—
15	91	69.5	—	15	91.5	72	—	15	93	74.5	—
16	93.5	70	—	16	92	71.5	—	16	96	74	—
17	93	71	—	17	92	69	—	17	95	75	—
18	90.5	70	—	18	89	71	—	18	90	74	—
19	92	72.5	—	19	93	69.5	—	19	95	75	—
20	92.5	72	—	20	92.5	70.5	—	20	91.5	74	—
21	92	72	—	21	93	71	—	21	90.5	71.5	—
22	—	—	—	22	91	73	—	22	93	71.5	—
23	94.5	70.5	—	23	91	69	—	23	94.5	70	0.38
24	95	71	—	24	95	71	—	24	88	74	—
25	93.5	72	—	25	93.5	71	—	25	93	74	—
26	97	72	—	26	96	71	—	26	91	70.5	0.32
27	98	70.5	—	27	92.5	73	—	27	90	71	—
28	94	71	—	28	93	72	—	28	96	75	—
29	93	74	—				—	29	92.5	73	—
30	94	72	—				—	30	94	75.5	0.04
31	95.5	71.5	0.02				—	31	94	71	—
			0.80				9.40				11.34

\* Taken from readings by the Liberian Rubber Corporation, Ltd., Mount Barclay.

## METEOROLOGICAL REPORT FOR 1913 (continued).

Date.	Max.	Min.	Rain-fall.	Date.	Max.	Min.	Rain-fall.	Date.	Max.	Min.	Rain-fall.
			11.34				19.21				31.00
April.				May.				June.			
1	82	70	2.13	1	88	70	—	1	81	71	0.17
2	91	74	—	2	90.5	70.5	—	2	88	70	0.10
3	91	72	0.02	3	89	74	0.27	3	88	72	—
4	91	71	—	4	87	71	0.58	4	92	72	0.15
5	93	74.5	—	5	88	73	—	5	90.5	75	0.60
6	90	70	1.28	6	90	73	0.21	6	93	72	0.25
7	88	72.5	—	7	90	74.5	0.10	7	88	72	0.60
8	91.5	70	0.54	8	93	75	0.20	8	91	73	0.10
9	91.5	71	—	9	91	71	0.18	9	87.5	74	—
10	93	74	—	10	91	75	—	10	90	74	0.05
11	93	74.5	—	11	94.5	73	0.12	11	90	73	0.95
12	90	72	0.32	12	90.5	72	—	12	?	72	0.35
13	90	73	—	13	92	72	—	13	86.5	70	1.40
14	89	71.5	0.36	14	90	73	—	14	87.5	70.5	—
15	90	73	—	15	82	70	—	15	89	71	0.56
16	92	74.5	0.02	16	91	71	0.07	16	88	74.5	—
17	89	74	0.08	17	93	71	0.38	17	83	72.5	0.14
18	89.5	73	0.34	18	91	72	0.43	18	85	70	2.80
19	89	73	0.05	19	91.5	71	0.45	19	—	—	—
20	91.5	74	—	20	90	71.5	0.44	20	81.5	69.5	1.30
21	93.5	73	—	21	87.5	71	1.38	21	77	70	1.64
22	?	?	—	22	88	69	2.48	22	84.5	72	0.54
23	92.5	75	0.12	23	85.5	68	0.54	23	88	74	0.30
24	87	72	0.64	24	85.5	71	0.04	24	85.5	72	1.18
25	93	75	0.78	25	87.5	74	—	25	78.5	72	1.44
26	93	73	0.04	26	89	73	0.84	26	78.5	71	2.56
27	87	72.5	0.02	27	86.5	73	—	27	82	72	0.84
28	91	72	—	28	89	73	0.02	28	89	69.5	0.48
29	93	72	—	29	87.5	74	1.93	29	85	72	0.04
30	76.9	69	1.13	30	86.5	70	1.13	30	85	69	1.98
			—	31	89.5	71	—				—
			19.21				31.00				51.52

## METEOROLOGICAL REPORT FOR 1913 (continued).

Date.	Max.	Min.	Rain-fall.	Date.	Max.	Min.	Rain-fall.	Date.	Max.	Min.	Rain-fall.
			51.52				80.37				111.54
July				Aug.				Sept.			
1	81	72	0.42	1	83	71	0.14	1	82	72	0.69
2	82	71	3.38	2	81	72	0.12	2	82.5	73	1.7
3	83	70.5	0.57	3	78.5	73	1.21	3	81	71	1.58
4	86	73	0.15	4	77.5	72	0.19	4	81	71.5	0.3
5	85	71	1.07	5	79	72	0.25	5	82	71	—
6	85	71	—	6	77	72	0.04	6	81.5	72	0.03
7	84	71	0.06	7	76	72	2	7	83	73	—
8	87	73	—	8	79	72.5	0.67	8	83	71	0.79
9	82	71	0.68	9	79	73.5	0.25	9	85	73.5	0.38
10	82	71	—	10	80	72	0.04	10	81.5	73	0.60
11	85	71	3.20	11	82.5	72.5	—	11	82	72	0.23
12	85	71	0.07	12	82	73	0.72	12	80	72.5	0.25
13	82	73	0.07	13	80	73	0.18	13	78	69	0.44
14	84	73	—	14	81.5	72.5	0.04	14	81	71	0.44
15	84	73	1.02	15	80	73	2.2	15	81	69	0.73
16	81	72	2.66	16	81.5	72	1.2	16	82	69	0.4
17	79	72	2.41	17	80	72	0.45	17	80	73	0.08
18	77.5	73	1.8	18	81.5	73	0.47	18	83	74	0.02
19	81	74	0.92	19	77	71	2.97	19	80	71	1.36
20	84	74	—	20	78.5	71	2.52	20	77	71	1.77
21	78	69	3.4	21	80	71.5	0.30	21	82	68	0.51
22	80	70.5	1.57	22	82	73	0.01	22	82	68.5	0.66
23	77	71.5	0.79	23	79	72	0.85	23	80	71	0.04
24	79	71	1.31	24	82	72.5	1.44	24	77	71	3.78
25	78	71.5	0.23	25	76	72	3.49	25	82	72	0.28
26	80	72.5	0.08	26	81	70.5	0.08	26	82	72.5	0.26
27	79	72	0.58	27	83	71	0.07	27	82	73	1.55
28	80	72	1.50	28	76	71.5	5.16	28	81	73	4.2
29	81.5	72	0.81	29	80	72	1.10	29	76	72	1.86
30	78	72	0.07	30	80	71	1	30	82	72	1.7
31	79.5	71	0.03	31	79	72	2.01				—
			80.37				111.54				138.17

METEOROLOGICAL REPORT FOR 1913 (*continued*).

Date.	Max.	Min.	Rain-fall.	Date.	Max.	Min.	Rain-fall.	Date.	Max.	Min.	Rain-fall.
			138·17				151·12				158·90
Oct.				Nov.				Dec.			
1	85	73	0·05	1	86	72	0·24	1	88	73	—
2	85	74	0·02	2	85	72	0·16	2	90·5	71	—
3	84	73	0·32	3	87	73	—	3	90	71	—
4	81	71	2·27	4	86	71	0·62	4	89	73	—
5	81	71	—	5	85	71	0·13	5	89	72	—
6	84	73	—	6	81	73	0·13	6	88	73	0·74
7	84·5	73	—	7	84	73	2·6	7	79	70	0·5
8	84	73·5	—	8	87	73·5	—	8	74·5	67	—
9	85	73	—	9	86	72	—	9	87	69	—
10	84	70·5	—	10	87·5	72	—	10	87	69	—
11	85	73	—	11	87	72	—	11	87	70	—
12	82	72	0·3	12	86	73	—	12	88	69·5	—
13	84	73	0·24	13	87	72	—	13	89·5	72	—
14	84	72	—	14	89	73	—	14	88	72	0·26
15	84	73·5	0·02	15	86	71	0·42	15	86	72	—
16	87	74	0·02	16	88·5	71	0·1	16	87	74	—
17	85	75	1·68	17	88	73	—	17	89	72	—
18	78	73	2·76	18	87	73	—	18	88	72	—
19	86	73	0·52	19	88·5	73·5	—	19	88	72	—
20	79	70	1·24	20	87	71	2·12	20	87	72	—
21	83·5	72	0·16	21	88	70	1·22	21	88	74	—
22	83	73	0·07	22	86	71	—	22	86	72	—
23	86	74	0·71	23	87	71	0·04	23	87	72	—
24	82	74	0·36	24	88	71	—	24	87	74	—
25	85	70	0·46	25	88	72	—	25	88	72	—
26	85	72	0·67	26	85	72	—	26	87	74	—
27	86	73	0·43	27	88	73	—	27	88	72	—
28	86	73	—	28	87	74	—	28	85	72	—
29	84	73	—	29	87	72	—	29	89	73	—
30	86	71	0·53	30	89	73	—	30	89	71	—
31	86	73	0·12				—	31	89	71	—
			151·12				158·90				160·40



found, if reliable statistics were available for consultation, that it takes place as a rule in the early part of May. For some weeks previously, more or less protracted showers have fallen, encouraging the supposition that the dry weather was at an end; but they almost invariably clear up again, giving the apprehensive ones a little more respite. But with the advent of May, the intervals between the rain storms grow briefer and briefer; the sun but rarely shows his watery face, holding aloof, as it were, from the constant weeping of a grief-stricken, woe-begone sky. The heavens are, therefore, obscured for days on end, wrapped in a grey, misty covering which communicates its depressing hue to the ocean, and broods low over the tops of the forest trees as though threatening to crush them to earth by sheer weight of water. So pass May and June, the temperature falling slightly. The immense volume of the surface water has, by this time, produced disastrous effects upon roads and pathways, sweeping away the soil, and leaving the natural bed of rough rock exposed to view, to the great danger of night wayfarers, and to the rapid destruction of boots and shoes. In the towns subsidence of buildings and walls is not infrequent; the softened, rain-sodden foundations crumbling beneath the weight of the superimposed masses of brick or masonry. So weeks pass slowly, with daily downpourings often without the smallest intermission for days at a time.

As July advances, the rains gradually cease, and about the middle or latter end of that month the sun reappears, the land, for the space of two or three weeks, trying to shake itself free from its burden of redundant waters. Now a rampant growth of lush, tropical vegetation springs rapidly from the ground, and chokes up roads and gardens at an astonishing rate. The heat is not very great, but the dampness is exceedingly trying, and one seems to be changing one's white clothing all day long. This is the period called the "Middle dries," and although not very comfortable, and assuredly not very healthy, it is a pleasant relief from the terrific

downpours which have by this time, no doubt, commenced to react unpleasantly upon the nervous systems of persons of neurotic tendency. But July passes and the early part of August, and then the rain, as though repenting the clemency exercised in the course of the "Middle dries," gathers its clouds once more together. The sun hides his face anew; the southerly gales again spring up, and Liberia is delivered over to the tender mercies of the watery cleanser which would seem, in the violence of its expiring forces, to be intent upon washing her completely away. There can be no doubt, I think, that September, on the coast, is the most rainy month; and then the downfalls are much heavier than earlier in the season. About now Europeans may be seen wading to and from their offices on Waterside in high gum-boots, stemming with difficulty the rushing torrents into which the footpaths are transformed. Raincoats, guaranteed permanently waterproof a few short months before, have in most cases yielded impotently to the unimagined violence of the element, and are ruined and useless—only those wise ones who have provided themselves with suits of oil-skin being able at this juncture to keep themselves moderately free from the rain, an advantage largely discounted by the profuse perspiration which their heavy protection engenders. With the beginning of October the deluge slackens, until, towards the latter end of that month, the clouds pass away, the sunshine returns, and the rain-saturated earth begins to exhale a variety of unwholesome vapours which, with the mosquitoes now freely propagating in the numerous stagnant forest pools, render this quite the unhealthiest period of the year. At this time the vegetation is amazingly luxuriant; grasses and weeds can scarcely be banished from the gardens; the trees have assumed a new and brilliant clothing of greenery, and the forest looks now at its brightest and best.

November really ushers in the dry season, although its arrival is not seldom still further postponed by the fall of numerous heavy showers. The month, however,

on the whole, is a pleasant one, with cool nights and warm days which continue throughout December with but little in the way of variation. In January the dry season is at its height; but still the temperature remains pleasant and bearable. About this month a singular phenomenon is noticeable in the prevalence of a land breeze from the north-east, which springs up and blows dryly and cold from the direction of the Sahara, accompanied by a curious, luminous haze, stated to be caused by fine particles of sand carried in suspension, which at times almost completely veils the sun. This is the celebrated "Harmattan" or desert wind. It comes on during the night, and blows with great chilliness during the early hours of the day, continuing until noon or later. Its intense dryness produces smarting in the eyes and nostrils; the lips crack, and finger-nails grow brittle. Papers and books, hitherto quite flat, curl up and assume all sorts of fantastic shapes, whilst wooden furniture and walls, rapidly contracting in the unwonted dryness, emit small if startling explosions and other ghostly noises. This is a period of great danger both for the Americo-Liberians and the indigenous tribes, who, when this wind is at his height, suffer severely from pulmonary complaints which often terminate fatally.

During February the pleasant, dry weather continues, but with a gradually rising temperature, until, about the middle of March, the gathering of heavy clouds, displaying in their murky depths frequent flashes of summer lightning, heralds an approaching change. By the latter end of the month, short thunder-storms with brief downpours of rain take place, and with the advent of April come a series of curious disturbances locally called "Tornadoes." The approach and development of one of these phenomena is a singular and impressive sight. They may come at any hour of the day or night, but as a rule they make their appearance after the prevalence of more than usual heat. Low down on the horizon to seaward—should the storm be approaching from that quarter—a dark grey band of cloud, almost

black at its sharply defined lower edges, mounts higher and higher towards the zenith, and, as it draws nearer and nearer, is seen to be travelling at a prodigious pace, the lightning playing about it in long, rosy, tremulous forks thrown into strong relief against the dense curtain of pouring rain which may be seen following upon the wings of the storm. Some time before its arrival, and whilst in one's own immediate surroundings the air is so hot and motionless that not a leaf stirs, an eerie obscurity growing deeper and deeper the while, the roar of the approaching wind becomes distinctly audible. Servants now rush to all parts of the house to close doors and windows, and every preparation is made for the sweep of the tempest. In an instant it envelops you. Two or three heavy gusts of icy-cold wind raise a thick cloud of reddish dust which goes flying away in swirling columns, bearing with it plantain leaves and palm fronds torn from the parent growths as it momentarily increases in violence. A rattling crash of overhead thunder, followed by another and another, announces the passage of the centre of the disturbance. It is now almost dark, and all pandemonium seems to have been let loose. The wind howls and whistles round the corners of the buildings, and doors and windows appear but frail protections. With a loud metallic clang, the bulk of the iron roof-guttering subsides in a mass of broken fragments of metal upon the cement causeway by which the house is surrounded, whilst a shivering of glass upstairs announces the blowing in of one or several windows. The rain is by this time descending in blinding, torrential sheets, with a sound which almost drowns all others, and transforms the erstwhile dusty garden walks into leaping, spouting, red cascades. But almost as it reaches its height, the fury of the tornado spends itself in one prodigious effort. Ten minutes after the chief catastrophe the wind is dying away, the sky grows lighter, a pleasant smell of warm, wet earth rises from the grateful soil, and in half an hour the sun has reappeared, assisting you in your efforts to learn the worst.

From the end of March to the recommencement of the rains, these brief but severe storms are not infrequent; they vary in force, some being mild whilst others are almost cyclonic in their violence. In nearly all cases, however, they are attended by damage, and not seldom by loss of life. Curiously enough, the uniform calmness of the sea is hardly at all affected by them; indeed, with the exception of the eternal glassy surf, I seem never to have seen a really rough sea upon the Liberian Coast.

Such is the Liberian year, and such a brief account of the vagaries of its climate. I think, on reading it, the consensus of opinion will shape itself towards the conclusion that, in so far as temperature is concerned, the conditions are not very onerous. Where, however, the chief discomfort is found is in the almost unvarying, exhausting atmospheric humidity, which gives rise to continuous, and at times immoderate perspiration, lowering the tone and general vitality of the European's system. Taking the whole year round, I should be disposed to regard December, January, and February as the three most agreeable months, March as probably the hottest and steamiest, and April and October as the unhealthiest. The remaining months are nearly all rainy, cool, and uncomfortable. Still, in comparison with other parts of Africa, the actual differences of temperature between the various seasons are not very great, and it is only after a year or two of residence that they come to be fully appreciated. To the newcomer, especially if it be his first sojourn in Africa, all times of year are trying—or, at least, he accustoms himself to believe that they are. But if due regard be paid to clothing, and to taking advantage of such breezes as are practically always blowing from one direction or another, much may be done to minimize both risk and discomfort. The senseless habit of wearing European clothing which so many men in West Africa affect should be strongly discouraged, and nothing but the lightest of unlined material used. I remember, on one of my voyages, remarking to a high official of one of

our colonies who happened to be on board, and, in a smartly-cut but perspiration-soaked blue serge suit was vainly trying to look cool, that he would feel much more comfortable in white linen garments such as those I was wearing at the time. With a look of deep disgust he assured me that, in the colony of which he was no doubt an ornament, no self-respecting official ever wore white clothes. "Why," he added, to my intense amusement, "You would be taken for some commercial person." This stupid, unprofitable snobbishness carries perhaps in a measure its own punishment in the horrible discomfort which must result from it; but, unfortunately, this discomfort is not confined to those who practise the silly habit, for, after some little time, their close proximity becomes extremely disagreeable to olfactory organs of even moderate sensitiveness. The sun, of course, is a great danger, and exposure to its rays may be responsible for much of the indisposition, not amounting to serious illness, which is so constantly experienced. What many persons appear to fail to understand is that, although somewhat overcast, the sun loses little or none of its power from this cause. It is I think, a generally accepted principle that light hazes have largely the effect of enhancing the force of solar rays, especially those most detrimental to human beings. But, in spite of this, it is by no means unusual to see persons out of doors in hazy or intermittently cloudy weather unprotected by the head-covering which would have been worn had the day been a cloudless one. I am of opinion that in West Africa no European is really justified in leading an outdoor life in the sense of exposing himself to the sun throughout the day. He might, no doubt, do so for a limited time, but would speedily suffer. Outdoor work should, therefore, except in cases of the most urgent necessity, cease, as far as possible, between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

In the dry months heavy dews fall, producing refreshment for a vegetation which, deprived of the constant rain whereto, during the remainder of the year, it is accustomed, would quickly perish in spite of the

atmospheric humidity which only disappears during the prevalence of the Harmattan wind. These dews, if a source of sustenance to plant life, are a serious danger to humanity, and exposure to them is often followed by such results as chills, febrile attacks, and others. Thunderstorms, apart from the electrical disturbances attending tornadoes, are common in October, November, and December, whilst sheet lightning makes its flickering appearance in the clouds throughout the hot, rainless months. But these storms are not very severe—certainly nothing like so impressive as the long-lasting, deafening explosions which, at the corresponding season of the year, are of such frequent occurrence in the Valley of the Zambezi. Waterspouts occur, I am informed, with some frequency during the rainy season.

But perhaps the most beautiful and fascinating feature of the Guinea Coast is the amazing clearness and beauty of the tropical moonlight. To say that one could read by it, would be but inadequately to convey any idea of its brightness and intensity. Its ghostly effect, seen through the luminous night mists, is worthy of observance hour by hour. In the perfect stillness, cigarette-smoke curls lazily upward. The trees cast jet-black shadows, whilst scarcely any stars are visible, although the night may be cloudless, so surprisingly are they subordinated to the wonderful moonlight of the tropics. It is a perfect picture of soft, pearly half-tones ; a clear yet subdued brightness. The fronds of the palms hang motionless, save where some vagrant current of night air waves them gently, with a beckoning, inviting gesture, which is graceful, mysterious, weird. Bats flutter noiseless, spectral, unreal, waxing and waning in their never-ending circles. From the dim recesses of the forest hard by—a black, gloomy mass below the rim of the luminous sky-line—comes the hoot of a questing owl, and over all, saturating all, broods the chastened radiance of the soft African night. There is nothing like it in the more temperate portions of the northern hemisphere ; its beauty must be experienced, for no description could possibly do it justice.

Turning now to the question of the health of Europeans in Liberia, this, as a whole, cannot truthfully be said to be good. For the somewhat unsatisfactory actual conditions there seem to me to be three radical reasons : no effort is made to guard against the bites of mosquitoes ; householders are not always careful to ensure the cleanliness of their surroundings ; and, as I have pointed out in a preceding chapter, the food supply is bad and insufficient. It has always seemed inexplicable to me that the West African Coast, whose long-realized unhealthiness of climate has to a great extent given rise to the establishment of eminent, efficient, and costly schools of tropical medicine, should have made such small efforts to give effect to the recommendations which the latter have so perseveringly made—recommendations of so simple a character that every man, more or less, could have made some attempt to follow them, with the result of the avoidance of great suffering, and of the saving of valuable lives. It is unhappily, rather a fashion or a pose for people in Monrovia to tell you that there are no mosquitoes there, or else that they never see any. Now neither of these statements, as persons who have made them to me must very well know, can possibly be true, since I do not remember having been in any single house in the city which was wholly free from these pests, and, be it remembered, the greater number of them were of the anopheline or fever-transmitting types. No house in Monrovia, with the solitary exception of the British Consulate-General, is mosquito-proofed with wire gauze thoroughly and efficiently, and if a striking example of the efficacy of this safeguard were sought, it would perhaps be forthcoming in the fact that whilst, during the period of several years back from the time at which I am writing, there has been no case whatsoever of fever on those premises, I do not think that there is any other single dwelling-house occupied by Europeans in the city which has not been the scene of several attacks, more than one of which has proved fatal. Now here in itself is a very striking result. Up to the date of my assumption



of office in the Liberian Republic, the consular premises had not been mosquito-proofed as I have described, and not one of my predecessors escaped attacks of fever, some of which were serious in the extreme. I do not, therefore, look for any great improvement in the health of the European community until this simple, elementary precaution has been more widely adopted.

Malarial fever, as will have been gleaned, is common ; but fortunately the severer forms of that disturbance are not. I suppose, in the prevailing conditions, everybody who comes to Liberia must, sooner or later, undergo a baptism of malaria, and it is very largely dependent upon the individual as to whether the attack prove a mild one of insignificant character, or a system-shaking visitation necessitating his immediate withdrawal from the country. As a rule, curiously enough, young, robust persons appear to fall the earliest, older men sometimes escaping altogether. Then again the personal habits of the patient go far to determine the seriousness of the malady, and the duration of the seizure. Here the advantages of a life of moderation are strikingly evident. Persons who have been wont to indulge in unnecessarily large quantities of alcohol find it more difficult to throw off a malarial attack than those whose habits may have been of a more temperate kind ; but in both cases convalescence is retarded by the want of proper nourishing food to assist the system in regaining its buoyancy. I have only heard of one or two cases of the terrible hæmoglobmuremic or " Blackwater " fever, that mysterious form of malaria whose treatment so long eluded the research of our tropical specialists ; still, it does occur, as do also the severer types of biliary fevers. Liberia has, I believe, hitherto wholly escaped visitations of that frightful scourge the yellow fever, although constantly recurring on the same coast-line, and at times at no great distance from the limits of the Republic, where it has exacted a heavy toll of human life both to the east and the westward. To increase our wonder and thankfulness for this most fortunate fact, we may frequently

see, if we know how to identify it, the striped *Stegomyia* or Tiger Mosquito, the recognized transmitter of the disease.

Sleeping sickness occurs sporadically, but never attains to the dimensions of an epidemic, although the *Glossina palpalis*, the Tsetse-fly first found by me in Liberia, may be said to be well distributed. I have only seen one case of sleeping sickness in Monrovia, that of a young girl who succumbed to the malady. It was said that she had never been beyond the precincts of the city, and although there are grounds for supposing that she may have been the cause of other persons being infected, I am unaware of any other appearance of the fatal disease up to the present time. Dysentery occurs sparingly, a somewhat singular fact in a country so entirely favourable to its development. I am also happily ignorant of any cases of typhus, typhoid, or similar maladies. With all this, however, other sicknesses there are which make their appearance periodically, such as small-pox, pneumonia, and other chest complaints, as also a variety of troublesome skin diseases. Filaria (Guinea worm) is very common, and cases of leprosy and elephantiasis far from unusual.

Glancing through the foregoing list, it would seem at first sight perhaps that those who would avoid one or other of the diseases mentioned must tread a narrow and sinuous path. But that is not really the case. The great majority of those diseases, some of which but rarely if ever attack Europeans, are avoidable by the observance of simple rules of life such as each person of judgment and common-sense should be able to make for himself, and, more important still, *to carry out*. These usually consist of nothing more difficult than avoidance of chill, mosquito bites, and dietetic and alcoholic excess. And here let me say at once that the use or abuse of stimulants by no means regulates itself by what might be considered sufficiency or excess at home; there are many persons, I regret to say, who only recognize the fact that they have over indulged in strong waters when they are no longer sober, but in

Africa, without going to that coarse extreme, a man may have had enough alcoholic stimulant, or even indeed too much, before the appearance of any premonitory symptoms of approaching inebriety. Africa is a land where the use of these things consists in employing them to fortify the system which, unaided thereby, the deleterious influences of the climate would tend rapidly to enfeeble. This requires but little, whilst to consume more than that little is simply to aid and second the enfeebling effect of an admittedly onerous climate.

If I were giving valedictory advice to persons on the eve of departure for tropical Africa, I would say if your health be normally good do not worry about it, do not fuss, and do not pass your time, as so many do, in constantly taking your temperature and regarding the normal point shown by the mercury almost with disappointment. Live cleanly, soberly, and well, remembering that when the system becomes wasted, as it usually does by the effects of the coast climate, it is good nourishing food, or at all events food as good as you can get, that it requires to restore it to vigour, and not alcohol except in strictly moderate quantities. If these very elementary rules are carefully borne in mind, cheerfulness maintained by the adoption of pursuits which keep one, apart from work, pleasantly occupied, and that curse of curses, *mental indolence*, held at arm's length, Europeans in West Africa may for long periods maintain as good or better health than would be possible even in their native climates.

The man who falls by the way is the resourceless "Grouser." This type comes to the West Coast, and, without the patience or intelligence to examine—let alone to study—the peculiarities of his new surroundings and make the best of them, immediately and deliberately closes his eyes to all that is not unpleasant and distasteful. Unable to have recourse to those amusements and distractions which absorbed his spare time at home, his mental equipment is often insufficient to enable him to adopt new ones. This is the man whom you always



**A SWARM OF LOCUSTS SETTLED ON VEGETATION.**



MR. AND MRS. MAUGHAM IN THEIR MOTOR LAUNCH *DELLAVAL* OFF MONROVIA.

hear "cursing the country" to which he should never have come, and who usually ends by taking to drink or other degrading habits which tend unfailingly still further to diminish his probably, never very extravagant value.

Of course, as time goes on, the conditions of life will improve, until, in common with all other parts of the Guinea Coast where formerly life was an uncertain quantity, the main causes which lead in the direction of danger and death will be stamped out and put an end to, for development—a growth which has not yet strongly rooted—brings with it means of enabling its human instruments to serve it without undue fear of serious deterioration. There are already unmistakable signs that, in so far as Liberia is concerned at any rate, a gradually widening interest in the country is awakening, a fact which should not only go far to place the small Republic upon a foundation beyond the reach of financial anxieties, but rapidly change for the better an old order of things connected with health and hygiene which seems to me to have long outlived its normal span of life.

From the earlier chapters of this book it will have been seen that the foundation from which Liberia sprang was originally one of humanity; but for many years the benevolent experiment of the American Colonization Society held out no very unmistakable signs of a completely successful result. Now, however, since the completion of the 1912 loan, and the almost uniformly smooth working of the international arrangements made to give effect to the agreement upon which it was based, the Negro Republic has leisure to look about her, and to set various portions of her house in order which, hitherto, for perfectly comprehensible reasons, have proved rather too much for available means of tidying up. First and foremost among these is the internal revenue. This, there can be no question, affords a very considerable scope for increase. It would, of course, be impossible immediately, or for many years to come, to impose anything like a general

system of native taxation ; but, as the collection of this great and yearly increasing source of income improves, the areas beyond which the law of taxation has at present been applied will yield year by year a richer harvest. Up to the outbreak of war, and arising almost entirely out of customs receipts, the surplus available for administrative purposes, over and above the monthly sums required for the purposes of the 1912 loan, formed the not inconsiderable nucleus of what should in the future when peace returns be a yearly increasing and sufficient revenue. Every dollar arising from the various avenues of internal taxation is, therefore, so much in addition to the good.

But what, in the future, is going to make more of Liberia than any single influence, is the employment of the immense numbers of natives at present leading idle and often mischevius lives in the far interior. I have pointed out how, in my opinion, this may be largely accomplished, and I am convinced that, however much the country may progress in other directions, its real awakening will be the moment when the aboriginal tribes discover unmistakably that economic development along various well-considered lines awaits their co-operation, and rise to the occasion.

It sounds possibly somewhat of an unscientific heresy to say so, but it has always appeared to me that discrimination between one class of African and another, as pursued by some authorities, was a little unnecessary, or, at all events, a good deal over-done. There are, it would be idle to deny, considerable differences between the various races, which manifest themselves as much by variations of physique as of intellect, and it is, I should think, somewhat doubtful if, in the case of any of them, their later destinies, either as individuals or as human divisions, will show them to have been able to conserve that exuberant physical vigour which at present stamps them as among the most virile members of the great family of man. In comparison with the Bantu tribes of Central, East, and South Africa, it would appear as though the West African peoples were more

intelligent, and possessed a comprehension of at least the rudiments of civilization which their brethren of the centre and the other side of the continent have perhaps had less opportunity of acquiring. But, in spite of these undoubted facts, I am not one of those who see wisdom in allowing the indigenous African tribes to emerge too rapidly from what we might describe as a very necessary condition of tutelage. There is, I think, no indication whatsoever, for reasons I have given elsewhere, that such a policy would be in any sense compatible with either their own interests or those of the world at large. There must be a working class, or the land will never be tilled. You cannot make everybody into what Americans call a "college man," lest the jungle return, and harvests be no more; and in a country like Liberia, with its innumerable tribes and peoples and languages, it seems to me that conservation of physique, gradual intellectual development, and homogeneity will be best compassed and induced, and the raw material gradually rendered more manageable by the encouragement of extensive fusions between the various tribal divisions, many of which, there can be no manner of doubt, would result in admirable blends. This, therefore, is a question which should be closely studied, as should also the advisability of more frequent marriages between the Americo-Liberians and educated indigenous natives in order to avoid the already apparent evils inseparable from too close a connection between the comparatively few remaining descendants of the original settlers.

Turning to the land itself, it seems to me that the coming of peace will be an ideal moment at which, with peculiar advantage, the question of its utilization, and the revision of out-of-date enactments connected with it, should be carefully examined. The normal financial position of the Republic, as we have seen, is one which need no longer give occasion for those anxieties and preoccupations which in the past exercised so disturbing an influence; but even with this advantage, the voice of the land is now heard crying



loudly for that attention which it will not be backward in giving back in hundred-fold measure to those who shall have the understanding to hear and interpret aright. As these lines are being written a great inter-allied agreement for railroad construction has, I learn, been concluded, and one may well hope that this may prove the forerunner of other great and far-reaching projects which will prove, without the shadow of question, a turning-point in the country's history. To such undertakings as these must the slumbering woodlands look for their awakening, and the inland tribes and the dwellers on the coast for the ready means of forming valuable intimacies pregnant with incalculably beneficial results in the future.

I should like to see more enthusiasm manifested in the study of native languages, and I feel sure that this is a branch of learning which would richly repay the labour involved. For future needs Liberia does not require the score or more of useless native dialects which are now spoken within her borders, and which are likely to prove a stumbling-block in the way of future progress. The use of one or two should be encouraged, and their employment throughout the country generally rendered as compulsory as their recognition as official media of speech would naturally make them. For these purposes I would recommend the Mandingo and the Vai tongues, and these should be studied, reduced to easily understood grammatical rules, and taught as obligatory subjects in both mission and secular schools throughout the country.

Liberia needs to execute no prodigies of administration to enable her to show to the world at large the wealth and importance of the territory which lies within her political limits. All that is necessary is a careful policy, conceived in a spirit of welcome for such bona fide projects as may display a reasonable prospect of mutually advantageous results. It is in no way to the discredit of the country as a whole that she should not possess the vital adjunct of ready capital, and this, as it does not exist within, must necessarily, come from

without. Its employment, therefore, in judicious and well-considered conditions, is all that is necessary to transform the fertile lands of Liberia into a smiling, productive, and prosperous State.

# LIBERIAN NATIONAL ANTHEM.

**Voices.**

1. All hail, Li - be - ria, hail! All  
 2. All hail, Li - be - ria, hail! All

**Piano.** *f*

hail, Li - be - ria, hail! This glo - rious land of  
 hail, Li - be - ria, hail! In u - nion strong suc -

Li - ber - ty shall long be ours;..... Though  
 - cess is sure - we can - not fail!..... With

*cres - - - - - cen - - - - - do.*

new her name, green be her fame, And migh - ty be her  
 God a - bove our rights to prove, We will o'er all pre -

pow'rs, .....  
 vail, .....  
 tr ..... tr ..... tr .....

And mighty be her  
We will o'er all pre

Musical score for "The Power of the Vail" in 2/4 time. The score is written for voice and piano. The voice part consists of two lines of lyrics: "pow'rs !....." and "vail !.....". The piano accompaniment is written for the right and left hands. The right hand features a series of chords and a final sustained chord. The left hand features a series of chords and a final sustained chord. The score is marked with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

*p*

In joy and glad - ness, with our hearts u  
With heart and hand our country's cause de

*Doloso.*

*p*

- mi - ted, We'll about the free - dom of a race be -  
 - fend - ing, We'll meet the foe with va - lour un - pre -

- night - ed. } Long live Li - be - ria - hap - py land! A  
 - tend - ing. }

home of glorious Li - ber - ty, by God's com - mand - A

home of glorious Li - ber - ty, by God's com - mand!





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